THE OLIVE BRANCH AND THE SPEAR: MERGING DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN CONFLICT PREVENTION

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Strategic Studies

by

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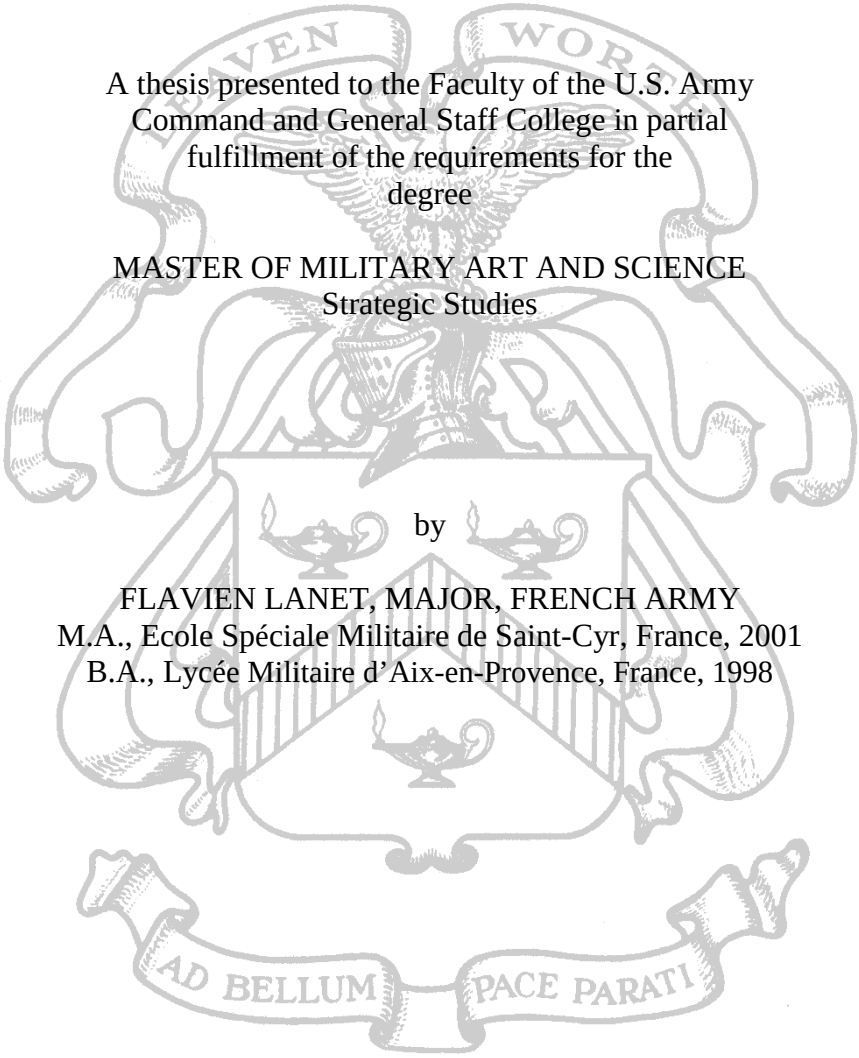

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2013-01

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE *(DD-MM-YYYY)*	**2. REPORT TYPE**	**3. DATES COVERED** *(From - To)*
14-06-2013	Master's Thesis	AUG 2012 – JUNE 2013

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

The Olive Branch and the Spear: Merging Diplomatic Actions and Special Operations in Conflict Prevention

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER

5b. GRANT NUMBER

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)

Major Flavien Lanet

5d. PROJECT NUMBER

5e. TASK NUMBER

5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301

8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)

10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)

11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

In the wake of a diplomatic refocusing where "Smart Power" becomes the new guiding line for foreign policy, the U.S. military leadership progressively advocates the necessity to prioritize light footprint and small-scale engagements. Focal point of these two tendencies, the political ambition to foster a merging process between Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the Department of State (DoS) for addressing pre-conflict instability is of critical importance.

Heavily involved in stabilization and nation-building operations over the past decade, both SOF and DoS have to readjust their priorities toward engagement-oriented and indirect approaches, in order to successfully take up the conflict prevention challenge. Assessing the robustness of an operational merging process between SOF and DoS down to the lowest levels of execution requires analyzing this interagency mechanism through four phases: education, training, planning and execution. Interviews and surveys among SOF and DoS experienced personnel allowed to identify three criteria for success: organizational cultures, procedures, and unity of command. Considering the willingness, interagency experience and structural frameworks already developed in both organizations, this thesis formulates final recommendations conditioning a successful achievement of "Commando-Diplomat Task Forces" in conflict prevention.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

Special Operations, SOF, Department of State, DOS, conflict prevention, Phase 0

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			**17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT**	**18. NUMBER OF PAGES**	**19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON**
a. REPORT	**b. ABSTRACT**	**c. THIS PAGE**			**19b. PHONE NUMBER** *(include area code)*
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	116	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE OLIVE BRANCH AND THE SPEAR: MERGING DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN CONFLICT PREVENTION, by Major Flavien Lanet, 116 pages.

In the wake of a diplomatic refocusing where “Smart Power” becomes the new guiding line for foreign policy, the U.S. military leadership progressively advocates the necessity to prioritize light footprint and small-scale engagements. Focal point of these two tendencies, the political ambition to foster a merging process between Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the Department of State (DoS) for addressing pre-conflict instability is of critical importance.

Heavily involved in stabilization and nation-building operations over the past decade, both SOF and DoS have to readjust their priorities toward engagement-oriented and indirect approaches, in order to successfully take up the conflict prevention challenge. Assessing the robustness of an operational merging process between SOF and DoS down to the lowest levels of execution requires analyzing this interagency mechanism through four phases: education, training, planning and execution. Interviews and surveys among SOF and DoS experienced personnel allowed to identify three criteria for success: organizational cultures, procedures, and unity of command.

Considering the willingness, interagency experience and structural frameworks already developed in both organizations, this thesis formulates final recommendations conditioning a successful achievement of “Commando-Diplomat Task Forces” in conflict prevention.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some persons deserved to be individually acknowledged for the support they have provided during the elaboration of this thesis.

I express my first gratitude to my thesis committee–LTC Adrian Donahoe, Dr. Joseph Babb, and LTC John Bettasso–for having so spontaneously agreed to join me in this challenge, for their sound advices, and for expressing grammatical tolerance towards a non-native speaker.

I deeply thank my interviewees, whose willingness and enthusiasm to share personal opinions and professional experience have been highly valuable: Susan Doman, Homer Harkins, Kurt E. Müller, and Kevin D. Stringer. The cohort of 37 classmates from the CGSOC Class 13-01, who kindly accepted to answer my surveys, provided a precious matter in my research process. Their anonymous but highly significant contribution to this thesis deserves to be acclaimed. I am also grateful to the CGSC Quality Assurance Office, in particular Maria L. Clark, whose mentorship and patience during the online surveys process has been of great help.

Last but definitely not least, my wife and my children deserve to be awarded my special prize for patience and understanding.

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ACRONYMS

AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
ASD SO/LIC	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflicts
C2	Command and Control
CA	Civil Affairs
CAP	Crisis Action Planning
CGSC	Command and General Staff College
CGSOC	Command and General Staff Officer's Course
COCOM	Combatant Command
CONUS	Continental United States
CSO	Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations
DA	Direct Action
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
GCC	Geographical Combatant Commander
HN	Host Nation
HRA	High Risk Arrests
HRO	Hostage Release Operations
ICAF	Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework
IORF	International Operational Response Framework
JFKSWCS	U.S. Army John Fitzgeral Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

JIACG	Joint Interagency Coordination Group
JIATF	Joint Interagency Task Force
JSOTF	Joint Special Operations Task Force
JSOU	Joint Special Operations University
MISO	Military Information Support Operations
NEO	Non-combatant Evacuation Operations
NSC	National Security Council
OCAI	Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
QDDR	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
QAO	Quality Assurance Office
S/CRS	Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization
SOCFWD	Special Operations Command Forward
SOCPAC	Special Operations Command, Pacific
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOST	Special Operations Support Team
TSOC	Theater Special Operations Command
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USASOC	U.S. Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
USSOCOM-NCR	U.S. Special Operations Command–National Capital Region
UW	Unconventional Warfare
VSO	Village Stability Operations
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destructions

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Special Operations Forces exemplify the ethic of smart power–fast and flexible, constantly adapting, learning new languages and cultures, dedicated to forming partnerships where we can work together.[1]
>
> — Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State, USSOCOM Gala Dinner, Tampa, Florida, 23 May 2012

The strategic significance of Special Operations Forces (SOF), located at the crossroads between political approval, diplomatic goals and sound security, underlines their very singular role within the interagency framework. Operation Neptune Spear successfully conducted in May 2011 against Osama Bin Laden is widely considered as the apogee of interagency coordination where SOF got the crucial responsibility to win the ultimate and decisive battle. One year later, as she was invited by Admiral McRaven to the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Gala Dinner in Tampa, Florida, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton highlighted the necessity to increase the interoperability of SOF and diplomats on the ground. She claimed the need for a better mutual understanding and a tangible merging of actors from both agencies, as key criteria for successfully implementing the "smart power" concept, a backbone in the Department of State (DoS) policy.

From World War II, Special Operations and diplomatic actions have been developing a quite significant tradition of convergening methods and activities. Their strategic significance and their direct impact over the national political threads and

[1]Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, USSOCOM Gala Dinner, Tampa, Florida, 23 May 2012, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/05/190805.htm (accessed 12 December 2012).

ambitions justify their tendency to be regularly evolving in parallel ways, if not merging. However, the United States political authorities seem to have recently acknowledged the crucial importance of leveraging the abilities for SOF and DoS to coordinate and synchronize their efforts with much more significance and pragmatism than before. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressed clearly her intent to boost the Department of State abilities in that way. Therefore, studying the mechanisms of merging diplomatic actions and special operations, and its mechanisms, may amount to assessing the feasibility of the Smart Power strategy now considered as the diplomatic cornerstone for the United States.

The lessons learned from the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the skepticism raised regarding massive, highly visible and exposed deployments, tend to call for a refocusing on sharp and light strategies in future warfare. The ability to minimize the political, economic and human costs while ensuring strategic success and viable diplomatic influence is now becoming one of the main challenges. Diplomatic policies and unconventional warfare have always been considered as priority ways for developing indirect and non-kinetic strategies, in parallel, through the achievement of common goals. The aim of Secretary Clinton initiative is to establish a concrete link at the tactical level where this former-parallel process is converging with the formation of "commando-diplomat teams."[2]

Therefore, the operational project shared by DoS and USSOCOM tends to implement the concept of custom-made even ready-made small detachments combining

[2]David Axe, "Clinton Goes Commando, Sells Diplomats as Shadow Warriors," Wired.com, 24 May 2012, http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2012/05/clinton-goes-commando/ (accessed 8 November 2012).

SOF capacities and diplomatic expertise. As a first significant step aimed at facilitating this interagency ground collaborative work, in November 2011 Secretary Clinton ordered the creation of a Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), whose main purpose within the DoS is defined as follows:

> Advance U.S. national security by breaking cycles of violent conflict and mitigating crises in priority countries [and to] engage in conflict prevention, crisis response and stabilization, aiming to address the underlying causes of destabilizing violence.[3]

Research Questions

This thesis intends to answer to the following primary research question: Can the cutting-edge interagency ambition to implement commando-diplomat teams down to the tactical level be successfully applied in support of conflict prevention strategies?

Answering that question requires a focus first on the following ones: Beyond the well-intentioned agreement between Department of State and Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) leadership, do both agencies already possess the procedures and the mentality to implement it effectively? To what extent can non-conventional even clandestine tactics be compatible with diplomatic actions and rules? If special operations forces are used to play a key-part for achieving diplomatic goals are diplomats also appropriate actors for gaining tactical success?

Definition of terms

This study requires the exploration of the doctrinal definition of key actors for the thesis, Special Operations Forces. In addition, assessing the abilities of both organizations

[3]United States Department of State, "Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization," http://www.state.gov/j/cso/index.htm (accessed 8 May 2013).

to increase their mutual coordination in conflict prevention call for a better definition of the formal outlines of that specific phase in the crisis continuum.

Special Operations Forces and Joint Special Operations are officially defined as follows:

> Special operations forces (SOF) are small, specially organized units manned by people carefully selected and trained to operate under physically demanding and psychologically stressful conditions to accomplish missions using modified equipment and unconventional applications of tactics against strategic and operational objectives. The unique capabilities of SOF complement those of conventional forces.
>
> Joint special operations (SO) are conducted by SOF from more than one Service in hostile, denied, or politically sensitive environments to achieve military, diplomatic, informational, and/or economic objectives employing military capabilities for which there is no broad conventional force requirement. These operations may require low visibility, clandestine, or covert capabilities. SO are applicable across the range of military operations. They can be conducted independently or in conjunction with operations of conventional forces or other government agencies and may include operations through, with, or by indigenous or surrogate forces. SO differ from conventional operations in degree of physical and political risk, operational techniques, use of special equipment, modes of employment, independence from friendly support, and dependence on detailed operational intelligence and indigenous assets.[4]
>
> A doctrinal definition of Conflict Prevention is:
>
> Conflict prevention consists of diplomatic and other actions taken in advance of a predictable crisis to prevent or limit violence, deter parties, and reach an agreement short of conflict. Military activities will be tailored to meet the political and situational demands, but will generally fall within the following categories: early warning, surveillance, training and security sector reform, preventative deployment, and sanctions and embargoes.[5]

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[4]U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-05.1, *Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 26 April 2007), xi.

[5]Joint Staff, Joint Publication 3-07.3, *Peace Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 17 October 2007), x-xi.

As studied in that thesis, the Conflict Prevention phase lies within the "Phase 0–Shape" as described in the Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning:*

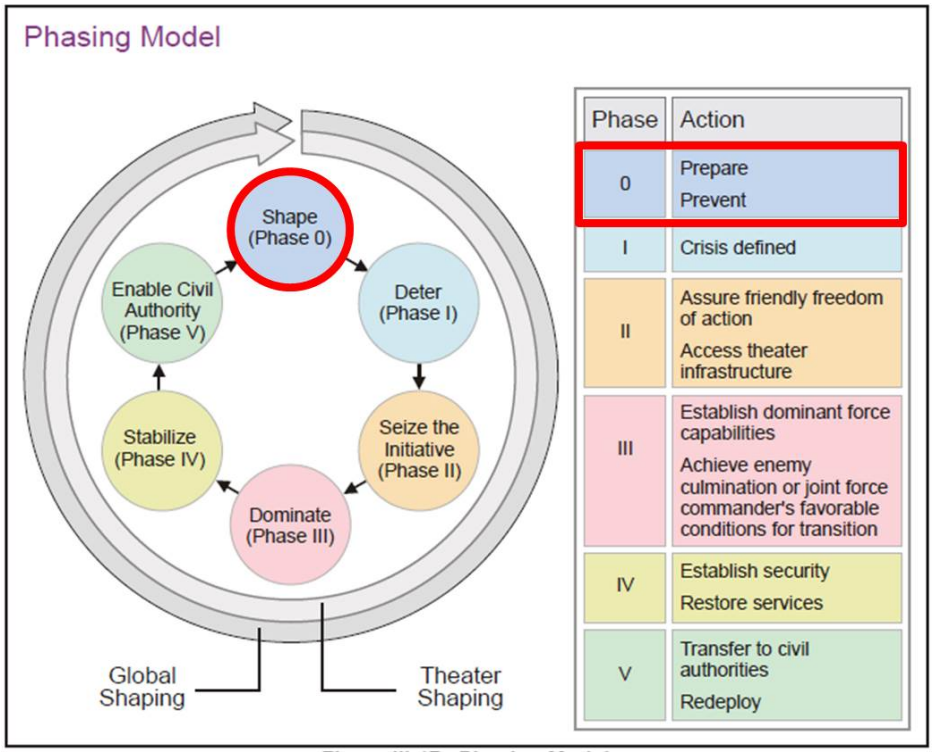

Figure 1. Phasing Model

Source: U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operations Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 11 August 2011), III-41.

Significance

Analyzing inter-agency mechanisms and reciprocal interests between the Department of Defense and the Department of State in the contemporary operational environment has been widely focused on over the past two decades, when the end of the Cold War called for the United States (and most of the Western diplomacies) to quite

radically reorientate their ambitions in the new geopolitical equilibrium. However, narrowing these studies to the way Special Operations Forces and diplomats may develop common procedures and integrate their actions for similar goals, from the strategic level down to the tactical one, seems to remain a quite under-covered area of interest for research.

Therefore, this thesis attempts to prove why and how the Special Operations Forces and the Department of State have a critical part to play together in the implementation of national strategies of influence, and in very decisive ways.

The significance of that thesis resides in the fact that understanding and assessing the synchronization of both special operations and diplomatic actions in conflict prevention are at the crossroads of major strategic concerns about how to achieve low-cost victories, light and discrete footprints, the anticipation of crisis escalation, and decisive strategic impact.

Low-cost victories

Operating in a restricted even constrained budgetary environment is becoming unavoidable nowadays, as the current financial situation in the United States remains volatile and likely to be long term. The budget limitations recently announced by the President Obama administration in regards to diplomatic and defense policies inherently induce the necessity to look after “low-cost victories.” The financial “black hole” represented by two major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has led the political leadership to reconsider military deployments and diplomatic efforts through the lens of financial requirements. Enhancing the operational synchronization between the Department of State and the Special Operations Forces may offer a significantly more acceptable

solution where a strategic impact may occur through the commitment of limited but better tailored actors. Merging diplomatic efforts and special operations is assumed to be a “high reward-low cost” strategy, and its development gains all its relevance in the perspective of developing affordable situations when it comes to solving crises and to promoting an enduring diplomatic influence.

Light and discrete footprints

If the current tendency seems to look for a reduced financial footprint, low-visibility even stealth commitments are also becoming major arguments for promoting Smart Power solutions, as officially developed by the Department of State. Betting on diplomatic influence through indirect approaches is becoming an essential consideration. An effective diplomacy must rely on a “win-win” approach where Host Nation (HN) organizations must be empowered in order to be held as the first responsible for any crisis solving strategy. Current experiences such as “Iraqization” or “Afghanization” prove to be a diplomatic way ahead. If these indirect strategies involving on the first line HN actors tend to become a priority for the DoS, they have always been considered as an intrinsic and fundamental trademark for SOF since World War II. Unconventional Warfare or Foreign Internal Defense strategies rely on the development of light and very discrete footprints. Therefore, in conflict prevention, the ability to significantly enhance the connivance between DoS and SOF on the ground is all the more relevant. The indirect mechanisms both agencies use may naturally find a way to be complementary.

Anticipation over crisis escalation

Building low-cost and light footprint strategies makes more sense when it can be performed before any irreparable descent into violence. A serious difficulty lies within the ability to determine any potential major threat with sufficient anticipation. The often brutal insurrectionary uprisings observed during the Arab Spring from 2011, and still echoing nowadays, clearly demonstrated that “strategic surprise” is no idle threat. Therefore, a key challenge is to use in combined ways some specific diplomatic and military tools able to help the political leadership understand and visualize any rising instability with enough anticipation to be able to react. When melted together, the expertise developed by the DoS through a permanent focus on geographical areas of primary concerns, and the professionalism traditionally demonstrated by SOF for intelligence and influence activities would create an unique and performing asset for identifying then undermining any significant escalation of violence. The deliberate focus developed by this thesis on conflict prevention strategies intends to underscore the crucial relevance of a close synchronization between DoS and SOF before any crisis reaches its tipping point.

Decisive strategic impact

The fourth criterion to argue the significance of the thesis is the ability to shape a new security environment strong and sustainable enough over the long-term. This condition for succeeding in conflict prevention requires the ability to directly and firmly take action against the root cause of any spreading instability or cycle of violence. Surgical strikes and non-kinetic operations to shape local perceptions are among those SOF missions whose relevance would get their whole expression when complemented

with the long-term economic, political and social projects diplomats are used to proposing, implementing and monitoring. A keystone in NATO's contemporary doctrine, the Comprehensive Approach strategy stresses the interdependence of security operations with diplomatic actions in support of any global campaign. Nowadays, a major requirement for any commander is to understand and supervise the resort to diplomatic tools in addition to his pure tactical military skills, at any level of execution. An extreme but widely accepted concept in regards to current overseas operations, the Strategic Corporal exemplifies this delegation of an interagency culture down to the lowest levels of execution. The unique tactical alliance proposed by the Commando-Diplomat Teams as studied in this thesis seems to provide a quite unique and relevant model where junior military and diplomatic actors are conferred with the responsibility of performing highly strategic operations focused at the tactical level. Therefore, this thesis intends to demonstrate how a limited interagency task force composed of few SOF and DoS personnel might be positioned to produce a decisive strategic impact.

Delimitations

Understanding in details the interagency process between military and diplomatic resources constitutes a major thread for this thesis. However, the vastness of such a study, already widely covered under several different angles of approach, requires a significantly narrowing of the scope. Therefore, while considering the SOF community as a whole, the DoS contribution to this interagency process will be primarily (but not exclusively) assessed through the part played by one of its internal organizations: the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). Recently created in November 2011 in the wake of the last *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (QDDR),

the CSO received the mandate to become the "home bureau for State Department expertise on conflict prevention, crisis response, and stabilization."[6]

Limitations

The sensitivity of the topic chosen in this thesis related to foreign policy issues but mostly to Special Operations in the contemporary era has regularly hindered the access to valuable and updated information. This predictable issue was identified before the research process began. As a foreign officer, the author regularly met difficulties getting relevant inputs from key personnel within the SOF community, as most of the documents related to the topic studied are currently classified. In addition, many of the SOF officers as well as some of the personnel from the State Department kindly agreed to share opinions and experiences through interviews, but required to remain anonymous. However, these very understandable and relevant reactions should not mitigate the validity of the information collected from these experienced SOF operators and DoS personnel.

Thesis statement

Based on the operational experiences and the interagency expertise mostly gained over the past decade, a merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention is particularly relevant, necessary, and feasible. Special Operations Forces and State Department personnel both show the willingness to reach a significant step further in combining their capabilities, and have already implemented

[6]Nina M. Serafino, *In Brief: State Department Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 10 October 2012), 4.

some structures and frameworks for allowing a closer collaborative process. However, fostering such interagency integration will require additional major impulsions from SOF and DoS leadership in the realms of transverse education, common training, joint planning and combined operational execution. Two major and crucial challenges need to be taken up, as key criteria for success: adapting the interagency educational and training mechanisms to pre-conflict and shaping operations, and clarifying the Command and Control mechanisms for operational execution, at the tactical level.

Conclusion

This thesis intends to scrutiny in depth the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention, through a comprehensive research process, including a review of some key documents referring to this topic (chapter 2), and the performance of interviews and surveys with personnel from the SOF and the DoS, as detailed in chapter 3. Several analyses describing the current state of play of this inter-organizational process will be provided in chapter 4, considering the following four critical phases when it comes to assessing an interagency cycle, as proposed by the author: Education, Training, Planning and Execution. Lastly, chapter 5 will summarize the key information gained and analyzed all along the thesis, while drawing a series of personal recommendations and proposals for allowing such SOF-DoS merging process to reach a significant, pragmatic and successful step further in conflict prevention activities.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies as well as doctrinal documents have already covered in depth the interactive process between diplomatic actions and military operations. The requirements raised by recent complex engagements in the joint and multilateral operational environments underlined the very necessity to include interagency mechanisms from the early stages of diplomatic or military operational planning. The still ongoing civil-military efforts deployed in Iraq and primarily in Afghanistan daily show the crucial necessity to explore more interagency processes, whose performance is an essential condition for strategic success. Over the past decade, officials from the Department of State and the Department of Defense have been considering as a priority the improvement of mutual understanding and combined actions between both organizations. Therefore, many official studies already exist that underline concrete and pragmatic ways to increase the level of interagency proficiency. These doctrinal documents, official publications or articles written by key actors from the DoS and the DoD will serve as a strong basis in the literature reviewed to support the thesis.

However, as previously mentioned in chapter 1, a critical gap exists when it comes to adapting and narrowing such interagency processes to the way SOF and DoS personnel may operate side-by-side in conflict prevention. This quite surprising gap probably exists for the two following reasons: confidentiality, and the overwhelming examples from Iraq and Afghanistan where such military and diplomatic resources are used to act in conflict stabilization phases.

The quite systematic level of confidentiality surrounding any doctrinal publication related to Special Operations tends to hinder any possibility to study in depth their interactions with the diplomatic resources. Some documents probably already exist that refer to this specific interagency process and in conflict prevention strategies. But access to them is denied due to classification reasons. This degrades the chance for any "outside" researcher to use them as a supporting element in a thesis. Therefore, the literature reviewed to support the development of that thesis remains limited to quite general publications coming from the DoS and the DoD.

Moreover, most of the literature related to the way diplomatic and military assets are combined refer to the overwhelming examples from both interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, these publications tend to restrict the discussion and the reflection to stabilization or rebuilding processes, [7] quite significantly different from the focus of the thesis: conflict prevention.

The literature reviewed to support this thesis fall into four different categories: (1) Department of State national level strategy, (2) official publications related to the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), (3) doctrinal documents and official publications released by the DoD and USSOCOM, and (4) individual research and studies about interagency processes between DoS and SOF.

[7]Derick W. Brinkerhoff, "Rebuilding Governance in Failed States and Post-Conflict Societies: Core Concepts and Cross-Cutting Theme," *Public Administration and Development* 25, no. 1 (February 2005): 3-14, http://download.clib.psu.ac.th/datawebclib/e_resource/trial_database/WileyInterScienceCD/pdf/PAD/PAD_1.pdf (accessed 8 April 2013).

Department of State national level strategy

The first *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (QDDR), released in 2010, represents the backbone for American diplomacy under the current Obama Administration. Hillary Rodham Clinton emphasized the relevance of that strategic guidance for the Department of State: "I have made the QDDR one of our highest priorities." The then Secretary of State also underlined the necessity to quite significantly refocus the diplomatic approach, referring to the current time of "sweeping change" we are living in, in reference to the expression mentioned by President Barack Obama in his *Introduction to National Security Strategy Report*, in 2010.[8]

Within the QDDR, what really shows a strong sense of relevance when it comes to studying the inter-agency process between the DoS and the military in conflict prevention resides in chapter 4: "Preventing and responding to Crisis, Conflict and Instability:"

> Many of the capabilities and skills we need for conflict and crisis prevention and response exist at State, USAID, and other federal agencies, but these capabilities are not integrated and focused on the problem in a sustained way. We must more effectively work with the Defense Department, which has unparalleled logistical, operational, and personnel capacities to operate in complex crisis situations and the capacity and knowledge to help countries build effective, responsible military forces under civilian leadership.[9]

In addition, the QDDR identifies several weaknesses in terms of merging diplomatic resources with external actors (such as the DoD) for identifying, preventing and undermining any crisis escalation:

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[8]The White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, May 2010), i.

[9]U.S. Department of State, *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 122-123.

> Too frequently, we:
>
> Miss early opportunities for conflict prevention;
> React to each successive conflict or crisis by reinventing the process for identifying agency leadership, establishing task forces, and planning and coordinating U.S. government agencies . . . ;
>
> Rely on traditional diplomatic and development strategies rather than build new tools (embedded in on-going institutions and processes) tailored to conflicts and crises;
>
> Delay bringing conflict, humanitarian, terrorism, law enforcement, intelligence, and military communities into the same policy and planning process for emerging crises, missing opportunities for synergy, shared intelligence, and integrated solutions.[10]

Therefore, the QDDR offers the framework for proposing a "new approach," where DoS and DoD (among other US Government agencies) must reach a much higher level of mutual understanding and integration, in order to efficiently face with the challenge of conflict prevention:

> Develop a single planning process for conflict prevention . . .
>
> Create new ways and frameworks for working with the military to prevent and resolve conflicts, counter insurgencies and illicit actors, and create safe, secure environments for local populations . . .
>
> Strengthen our capacity to anticipate crisis, conflict, and potential mass atrocities and raise awareness of emerging governance problems.[11]

An interesting point highlighted in chapter 4 from the QDDR is the question of the command and leadership in planning and conducting conflict prevention strategies, in an interagency process. Who has to take the lead, with the aim of unity of command and unified action? Even if the QDDR promotes the "civilian leadership"[12] for such

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[10]Ibid., 123.

[11]Ibid., 124.

[12]Ibid., 126.

processes, this specific point will be assessed in this thesis, because the current structural and organizational context within the DoS and mainly the DoD does not allow such simplicity and clarity. The QDDR indeed mentions the exception of the DoD prerogatives:

> In the field, the Chief of Mission shall have full responsibility for the direction, coordination, and supervision of all U.S. government executive branch employees in that country, with the exception of employees under the command of a United States area military commander.[13]

Consequently, while being able to significantly and positively catalyze a true and accomplished coordination between personnel from both organizations, this command and control (C2) uncertainty, if not fixed, can also remain a significant obstacle. This consideration inherently brings to the negotiation table the question of the profile required for interagency teams to work effectively in conflict prevention. Some structures dedicated to facilitate cross-agencies collaborative work already exist, such as the International Operational Response Framework (IORF) within the Department of State, but are not enough to reach a high level on tactical integration on the ground between diplomats and military. The QDDR thus calls for the implementation of "task-oriented teams to ensure maximum impacts."[14] This ambition is relayed in this thesis, whose goal is also to propose a model of a tailored interagency team melting SOF and DoS personnel, while defining the ideal chain of command such a team would operate under.

[13]Ibid., 134.

[14]Ibid., 145.

Official Publications related to the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations

The Year 2010 revealed a crucial turn in American diplomacy. Hillary Rodham Clinton, then Secretary of State, not only implemented the Smart Power strategy as a cornerstone largely supported by the *Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, but also internally reorganized her Department, announcing the notable creation of a Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). This replaced the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS), effective November 2011. The CSO could be considered the key DoS stakeholder in regards to the question of merging diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention.

A key document detailing the mission, the structure, the capabilities as well as the challenges for the CSO is: *In Brief: State Department Bureau for Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)*, a comprehensive report prepared for the U.S. Congress by Nina M. Serafino, a specialist in International Security Affairs.[15] Dating from October 2012, this publication provides information on the scope of strategic interactions of the CSO with other major actors from U.S. government agencies.

This report underlines the skepticism that the political leadership expressed towards the CSO's preceding structure: the Office of the Coordinator of Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS).[16] The S/CRS seems to have not reached the initial objectives it had been given. It focused exclusively on state-building and stabilization processes, and with a questionable efficiency. In the wake of S/CRS demise, the cutting-edge CSO

[15]Serafino.

[16]Ibid., 3.

structure received a priority mandate to focus much more on conflict prevention, in addition to the already existing stabilization portfolio. At that time in 2010, personnel from the DoS had been operating quite exclusively in stabilization in Afghanistan and in Iraq for almost ten years, with lukewarm results. Therefore, a priority in foreign policy was to foster expertise in conflict prevention. Born in a political context of skepticism about the Department of State's abilities to deal with unstable situations overseas, the CSO has had to take up this crucial gauntlet of promptly and pragmatically finding robust ways to operate in prevention of any irremediable escalation of violence. The CSO has to prove to the political leadership its relevance in conflict prevention, whose process inherently requires a high level of synchronization with other agencies capabilities, primarily the DoD and the SOF.

Serafino's report to the U.S. Congress points out that Ambassador Rick Barton, Assistant Secretary for Conflict and Stabilization Operations, revised downwards the mandate of the CSO to a much more reasonable and feasible one. Narrowing the CSO scope to "small-scale" and "targeted assistance," while "mainstream[ing] the concept of conflict prevention as part of U.S. diplomacy and assistance efforts,"[17] Ambassador Barton intuitively or purposely open the door to a natural convergence towards the SOF, also sharing quite similar traits.

The CSO has decided to assess and demonstrate its conflict prevention abilities by focusing proprietarily on four countries: Burma, Kenya, Syria and the northern tier of Central America. The Syrian example is all the more relevant in support of this thesis, as the CSO way to operate there, in favor of the movements opposed to Bashar Al-Assad's

[17]Ibid., 6.

regime, shares many similarities and converging points with Unconventional Warfare (UW) strategy, a typical SOF trademark: "For Syria, CSO is working with Syrian civilian opposition groups located in Turkey, providing training and equipment to facilitate networking, communications, and preparations for governing in the event of regime change."[18]

Considered as one of the most clandestine activities covered by the SOF, the UW strategy represents an atypical case to scrutiny in this thesis, as the inclusion of diplomatic resources to support them may seem paradoxical even axiomatic. Clandestine and covert operations are inherently far removed from overt and public diplomacy, often worked in the full view of the press and all parties involved.

Doctrinal documents and official publications from the Department of Defense and the Special Operations Command

The first doctrinal reference detailing the role played by the SOF in support of the National Security Strategy, while focusing on their integration process beside the DoS, is the latest edition of the Joint Publication 3-05 *Special Operations*, released in April 2011.[19] However, the process of integrating SOF beside DoS personnel for ensuring the performance of any unified action is definitely not detailed enough. Only three paragraphs are dedicated to this integration, referring to a "proven model" of synchronization that remains stuck at the strategic and operational levels:

[18]Ibid., 7.

[19]Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 18 April 2011).

> A proven model in attaining unity of effort with interorganizational partners is the complementary character of the DoS embassy mission strategic plans and country operational plans, and a GCC's theater campaign plan.[20]

Moreover, JP 3-05 emphasizes the very key importance of confident interpersonal relationships SOF commanders need to preserve with their DoS counterparts. If "consultation, persuasion, compromise, and consensus"[21] are obviously essential behavioral values to develop in order to foster such interagency process, do they constitute a guidance clear and comprehensive enough to help any SOF commander, acting at any level and on the ground, beside diplomatic counterparts? Therefore, a critical gap identified within this doctrinal reference JP 3-05 is the absence of any proposition for a detailed, pragmatic and comprehensive interagency process where SOF have to merge their military efforts with the diplomatic resources, mostly at the tactical level. Neither the Joint Publication 3-08[22] related to Interagency Coordination, nor the Joint Publication 3-05.1 *Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations*,[23] nor even the *Commander's Handbook for the Joint Interagency Coordination Group*[24] provide enough clarity, direction or milestones to a SOF or a DoS tactical operator to successfully deal

[20]Ibid., III-15.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-08, *Interorganizational Coordination During Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 24 June 2011).

[23]Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-05.1, *Joint Special Operations Task Force Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 26 April 2007).

[24]United States Joint Forces Command, *Commander's Handbook for the Joint Interagency Coordination Group* (Suffolk VA: Joint Innovation and Experimentation Directorate, 1 March 2007).

with the challenge of merging special operations and diplomatic tools down to the lowest levels of execution.

Individual research and studies about the interagency process between the Department of State and Special Operations Forces

As previously mentioned, many research documents and publications related to the contemporary interagency process between DoD and DoS have already been released, but very few narrow the scope to Special Operations. Surprisingly, for that specific topic, the existing literature in terms of non-official and non-doctrinal documents also appears very restricted, which tends to argue in favor of this thesis, whose goal is to fill a research gap.

Therefore, the research documents and publications analyzed in support of this thesis are timely in providing some key thoughts and orientations that are directly relevant to explore in depth the merging process between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention.

A first publication to consider has been written by Dr. Michele L. Malvesti, a widely experienced senior national security advisor, currently teaching at Yale University. Her personal experience as the Senior Director for Combating Terrorism Strategy in the National Security Council staff, in the George W. Bush White House, between 2002 and 2007, and also as an intelligence analyst in the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) gives her credibility in terms of her insights about how SOF should readjust their posture to successfully take up contemporary challenges. Released in June 2010, her report *To Serve the Nation: U.S. Special Operations Forces in*

an Era of Persistent Conflict[25] proposes to the USSOCOM several actions to take for greater integration of SOF units mainly at the strategic and operational levels, and in some ways at the tactical one. Dr. Malvesti raises three significant and very relevant considerations that are of primary interest in support of the thesis: improving the positioning and the perception of the whole SOF community to the policymakers' eyes, prioritizing "engagement-oriented" SOF units and a non-kinetic approach, and re-organizing the operational SOF chain-of-command towards a better and more inclusive synergy between SOF and Country Team at embassies.

Although widely covered by diverse media, the SOF community tends to remain in the shadow when it comes to a clear understanding of its values, culture and civil-military integration abilities among the senior policymakers in Washington. Dr. Malvesti underlines the necessity for the SOF to create the conditions for senior officials to better appreciate their "preventive or deterrent value."[26] Calling for a merging process between diplomatic actors and SOF in conflict prevention would make no sense if the USSOCOM does not consider it a priority to be more aggressive and proactive in the promotion of its interagency capabilities. Malvesti does not call into question the terrific reputation gained by SOF for performing Direct Action (DA) operations and surgical raids, but raises a critical point: the necessity to put forward more aggressively the non-kinetic abilities. Senior officials need to be better briefed and convinced about the decisive role SOF can and should play in conflict escalation scenarios, mostly through the use of "engagement-

[25]Michele L. Malvesti, *To Serve the Nation: U.S. Special Operations Forces in an Era of Persistent Conflict* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, June 2010).

[26]Ibid., 25.

oriented" or "warrior-diplomat activities."[27] A major difficulty resides in the ability for any executive organization to modify a traditionally well ingrained reputation in policymakers' eyes. To change this prevalent but distorted perception will not be easy. Michele L. Malvesti refers to the political scientist James Q. Wilson, who mentioned the necessity to "avoid learned vulnerabilities."[28] In the case of SOF, a crucial challenge is to reassure U.S. senior politicians about the decisive role Special Operations play in preventing conflict escalation, in direct support of diplomatic objectives. It is up to the SOF to make the first step towards educating policymakers, and to propose creative and realistic operational solutions. Dr. Malvesti thus calls for a burst of innovation from SOF:

> It is incumbent on SOF to bring policymakers innovative ways to operate across the 21st-century security landscape. Innovation should focus not just on kinetic actions to defeat imminent threats in hot areas, but also on prevention-oriented engagement activities that will stabilize the environment and allow for critical follow-on development aid and assistance in simmering regions of the world.[29]

Such a battle of influence in favor of SOF might encourage them to be better positioned within the political and interagency picture. Dr. Malvesti underlines the need for extending the SOF partnerships far beyond the Intelligence Community. On that point, she specifies the profit gained by a more visible SOF footprint within the DoS:

> While SOF play important roles in State's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, they also can contribute to larger foreign policy objectives when they are positioned or working in direct support of State's regional bureaus. In light of the State Department's primacy overseas and the importance of SOF activities outside theaters of combat, SOCOM also should explore placing a

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[27]Ibid., 25.

[28]James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy* (Basic Books, New Edition 2000), 191.

[29]Ibid., 27: "Juan Zarate noted the importance of developing policy for employing SOF in advance of using development aid and assistance for national security purposes." Juan Zarate correspondence with Malvesti, 13 February 2010.

general or flag officer at State, just as State has a senior political advisor at SOCOM.[30]

Lastly, Michele L. Malvesti opens the way to a very topical subject: re-assessing the positioning of SOF units operating overseas in regards to the existing military and diplomatic chains of command. She is clearly calling for a more significant inclusion of SOF under the supervision of Diplomatic Missions, arguing that they "should operate under NSDD 38 (National Security Decision Directive 38)."[31] Therefore, her proposition would tend to bypass the prerogatives of the Geographical Combatant Commanders (GCC), and their Operational Control (OPCON) of all the SOF operating within their Area of Responsibility (AOR), through the Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC). Malvesti dares to defy convention, suggesting complete control authority over SOF acting overseas to the Chief of the local Diplomatic Mission. Re-organizing the chain of command for SOF operating overseas has recently been a flagship consideration for Admiral McRaven, current U.S. Special Operations Commander. The question raised by Dr. Malvesti in 2010 still remains relevant for this thesis. The Command and Control dimension of a better merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention is a central question later considered in this thesis.

A second publication providing valuable insights and thoughts in regards to the thesis analyzed is: "The Future of Special Operations: Beyond Kill and Capture," an

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[30]Ibid., 28.

[31]Ibid., 29. Dr. Malvesti provides the following definition of the NSDD 38: National Security Decision Directive 38, Staffing at Diplomatic Missions and their Overseas Constituent Posts, dated 2 June 1982, gives the Chief of Mission control over the size, composition, and mandate of overseas full-time mission staffing for all U.S. government agencies."

article written by Linda Robinson[32] and published in *Foreign Affairs* in November 2012.[33] The author is focusing on the crucial necessity for SOF to re-adjust their posture, their ambitions and even their culture in order to optimize their utility for facing near-future challenges. The crux of her paper comes down to the following quote: "It is time for special operations forces to prioritize indirect operations."[34]

Linda Robinson underscores the risk of an increased "misperception" of SOF capabilities by the policymakers, who tend to be easily seduced by direct and "kinetic" operations, such as raids or drone strikes. The wide media resonance such special operations arouse is politically attracting. After more than ten years of high-intensity engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq, where SOF have mostly built their reputation on performing such surgical operations, convincing the senior politicians to rely much more on indirect and long-term approaches becomes a difficult challenge.

Therefore, a central question to answer is: where are Special Operations the most strategically decisive? To encourage the discussion on such a crucial point, Robinson cites Admiral William McRaven as he was questioned by the U.S. Congress in March 2012:

> The direct approach alone is not the solution to the challenges our nation faces today as it ultimately only buys time and space for the indirect approach. . . . In

[32]Linda Robinson is Adjunct Senior Fellow for U.S. National Security and Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

[33]Linda Robinson, "The Future of Special Operations: Beyond Kill and Capture," *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 6 (November/December 2012): 110-122.

[34]Ibid., 111.

> the end, it will be such continuous operations that will prove decisive in the global security arena.[35]

The positive tactical impacts of direct approaches are not enough to guarantee strategic success, mainly because they do not often come within the scope of a sustainable and long-term security policy. To build a successful strategy, Robinson widely praises the merits of the indirect approach, that fosters "long-term relationships [that] are conduits for understanding and influence."[36] From this perspective, partnerships abroad are key and unilateral interventions cannot create the conditions for an enduring and credible conflict prevention strategy. If such partnerships are of fundamental importance for SOF, the role played by the DoS to build and sustain them is crucial.

To strengthen her arguments about partnerships, Linda Robinson refers to two of the most recent success stories where SOF have been able to understand, shape and influence in a very decisive way. Colombia and Philippines may serve as relevant references when it comes to successfully preventing an escalation of violence or instability. Launched in 1998, Plan Colombia is an example of a powerful interagency tool. Its $7.5 billion allocation allowed the SOF and their partners from the DoS and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to build, organize and sustain over the long-run an unified whole-of-government approach. Successful partnerships with foreign nations in conflict prevention rely first on the ability to internally foster interagency mechanisms.

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[35]Ibid., 112. The integrality of the posture statement made by Admiral William H. McRaven before the 112th Congress Senate Armed Services Committee, on March 6, 2012, available on the website of Federation of American Scientists, http://www.fas.org/irp/congress/2012_hr/030612mcraven.pdf (accessed 17 March 2013).

[36]Ibid., 114.

If Colombia and Philippines partnership strategies have finally proved to be successful, Linda Robinson's stress on the risk of building alliances between SOF and potentially embarrassing partners will be borne out. Mentioning this risk as "blowback,"[37] she underlines the absolute necessity to carefully assess the diplomatic second and third order effects of SOF partnering missions. Improving in a much more detailed manner the way SOF and diplomats combine their actions in conflict prevention is key for decreasing the risk of an inappropriate use of SOF.

Lastly, Robinson calls for a much stronger integration of SOF within the interagency arena. Referring to Admiral McRaven's willingness to enhance the TSOCs abilities in support of the interagency process in overseas operations, she underlines the necessity to reach a significant step further in the way SOF may operate in support of a comprehensive multi-agencies policy: "The more urgent reforms are the ones that foster greater integration, not greater stove piping, both within the U.S. military and between the military and its civilian counterparts."[38]

Is an "inherently hierarchical institution"[39] (i.e. the U.S. military) really ready to become imbued with a "culture of collaboration"? In her conclusion, Robinson raises this critical question, precisely identifying potential obstacles when it comes to better merging diplomatic actions and special operations: mutual cultural awareness, and reciprocal perception from both agencies.

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[37]Ibid., 118.

[38]Ibid., 122.

[39]Ibid.

Other key individual publications to mention in support of the thesis are the following two research papers by Dr. Kevin D. Stringer, an Associate Professor at Webster University in Geneva, Switzerland. His personal experience as an officer in the U.S Army, temporarily serving in the Special Operations Command Africa (SOCAFRICA), as well as previous assignments as a Foreign Service Officer in the DoS give much relevance to his analyses and propositions.

Stringer's first paper to consider is: "The U.S. Interagency Role in Future Conflict Prevention: Provincial Reconstruction Teams for Select Partner Nations."[40] This paper explores the poorly covered area of conflict prevention strategies encompassing civil and military resources. His central thesis focuses on the crucial necessity to adopt a "proactive rather than a reactive approach"[41] in conflict prevention, through the implementation of ad-hoc interagency structures, inspired by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) as applied in Afghanistan or Iraq. The singularity of his proposition resides in its divergence from the interagency model currently developed by the CSO Bureau in the State Department, whose goal is not to promote permanent deployments, but to argue for expeditionary, contingency and timely conflict prevention strategies. Therefore, Stringer calls for the enhancement and the relevance of "PRT-like units"[42] operating in weak states like those previously identified: "As a first step the U.S.

[40]Kevin D. Stringer and Katie M. Sizemore, "The U.S. Interagency Role in Future Conflict Prevention: Provincial Reconstruction Teams for Select Partner Nations," *Interagency Journal* 3, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 11-20.

[41]Ibid., 11.

[42]Ibid., 13.

government would identify four or five states with national security relevance as pilots for a PRT conflict-prevention program."[43]

A few months before the instability in Mali required a sudden and proactive military intervention by the French armed forces and African Union troops, Stringer had been clear sighted by referring to the Malian situation to support the idea of a PRT deployed upstream from an irreversible peak of insecurity. Such a PRT, specifically tailored for conflict prevention, would encompass the following capabilities. It would include seven to ten personnel working in the areas of: governance, development, law enforcement and security or foreign internal defense (FID). Therefore, here appears the significant part played by SOF in support of such a conflict-prevention Task Force, as the FID strategy remains an emblematic SOF trademark (mostly U.S. Army Special Forces).

The thorny question of unity of command is suggested, but not in great details. Stringer would argue in favor of a DoS lead process. Such an allocation of responsibilities for driving the conflict prevention strategies does not match with the current hierarchical structures of both DoD and DoS. In the core of these organizations, the overwhelming power of COCOMs over any sort of military engagement including SOF does not set the adequate conditions for the emergence of ad-hoc PRTs. The proposals made by Stringer are particularly valuable and relevant in support of this thesis of a much more significant and audacious merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention. Exploiting the interagency "spirit" already developed across PRTs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq, and transferring it from stabilization to conflict prevention mechanisms make a lot of sense.

[43]Ibid., 16.

In the wake of this research paper about interagency process in conflict prevention, Stringer recently published an article, once more with Katie M. Sizemore: "The Future of U.S. Landpower: Special Operations Versatility, Marine Corps Utility."[44] Narrowing the scope to SOF makes this paper all the more relevant in support of this thesis, even if the interagency coordination within the DoS is not the priority of the study. Stringer emphasizes the necessity to better use the versatile, flexible and comprehensive expertise uniquely developed within the U.S. military by the SOF, but also the Marine Corps, through responsive ad-hoc tailored Task Forces. This article underlines the relevance of a "third way" in order to deal with the strategic and operational challenges of conflict prevention in a near future. This new approach goes beyond the dualistic consideration of a focus on conventional approaches on one hand, or on counter-insurgency (COIN) and irregular warfare strategies on the other hand:

> It seems a third way is needed for the future. In a prescient article, Michael Cohen summarized thinking on the counterinsurgency and conventional approaches and concluded that both camps have it wrong. He asserted the argument . . . that, "in the end, perhaps the focus of the U.S. military and American foreign policy, writ large, should be to avoid counterinsurgencies—and to avoid conventional conflicts." [45] This article subscribes to this view and proposes an indirect and preventive land force paradigm where worldwide ground engagement is led by SOF and the Marine Corps.[46]

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[44]Kevin D. Stringer and Katie M. Sizemore, "The Future of U.S. Landpower: Special Operations Versatility, Marine Corps Utility," *Joint Force Quarterly* 69 (2nd Quarter 2013): 84-91.

[45]Michael Cohen, "The Counterinsurgency Trap: Future of the US Military," *The New Atlanticist*, 23 March 2009, www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/counterinsurgency-trap-future-us-military (accessed 2 May 2013).

[46]Stringer, and Sizemore, 87.

The complexity and unexpected nature of future engagements requires enough intellectual honesty to recognize the central relevance of SOF. Their full-spectrum capabilities, responsiveness and expertise in indirect approaches are becoming key criteria to "shape, influence, manage, or deter specific risks found in key regions in the future."[47]

Stringer emphasizes the utility of SOF and Marine Corps units for taking the lead in the landpower application of conflict prevention. However, the integration of procedures and culture from both military organizations in the interagency process working alongside diplomatic actors is not mentioned. This gap needs to be better addressed, an ambition advocated by that thesis.

Summary

Most of the relevant literature reviewed to support this thesis covers one of the following broad areas: the diplomatic resources dedicated to conflict prevention, the interagency process between military and civilian actors, and the current re-balance of SOF priorities toward engagement-oriented and long-term operations. A common trend exists within the DoD and DoS strategies and goals, as well as among most of the research papers studied. They all agree on the necessity to significantly modify the U.S. diplomatic and military posture. The aim is to rely to a greater extent on "low footprint and high payoff operations," in order to better serve American interests (and broadly speaking Western ones) in a strategic environment characterized by complexity, if not

[47]Ibid., 88.

chaos. This environment will regularly exhibit: a diversity of overlapping actors, political repression, the power of people's perceptions and influence, and financial versatility.

Amazingly, a gap remains when it comes to assessing and challenging in detail the concrete abilities from DoS and SOF to unify their action in conflict prevention, and merge their efforts down to the lowest levels of execution. The literature mentioned in this chapter provides highly valuable inputs in support of the thesis developed, as well as several other articles and publications quoted in the following chapters. However, all these documents are not enough to fully cover the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations. Chapter 3 will therefore describe the research methodologies used by the author to better clarify and solidify the arguments and conclusions defended in the thesis.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in support of that thesis remains focused on answering the primary research question. Can the cutting-edge interagency ambition to implement commando-diplomat teams down to the tactical level be successfully applied in support of conflict prevention strategies? In other words, the methodology used to collect and exploit different sources of information was dedicated to assess in depth the tangible viability of merging diplomatic and SOF resources for identifying, handling and solving inherent roots of a rising crisis. Before initiating the research process, the complexity of such an interagency mechanism directly influenced by several parameters had to be clearly understood, in order to design the collecting and exploiting methodology in a very broad and comprehensive manner.

Different methods have been used to provide diverse perspectives about the way both organizations, SOF and DoS, operate together and should orientate their priorities in a near future, in order to optimize reciprocal understanding and synchronization. Qualitative research methodologies have been used to support the arguments later developed in chapter 4. Other relevant information has been also gained through the use of quantitative methods.

Therefore, this chapter intends to define the research criteria delimited, as well as the different kind of methodologies used.

Research criteria

Several different areas have been identified as key domains for systematic scrutiny, analysis and assessment. This coherence and linearity in the research methodology have provided a better estimate of the viability, the strengths and the weaknesses of the current interagency process between SOF and DoS in overseas operations. Therefore, the criteria considered all along the research process have been defined in four phases: education, training, planning and execution. Every research methodology is intended to provide clear insights about how the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations would be oriented by these four critical domains, and would influence them.

These four criteria are part of a whole interagency sequential cycle, whose goal is to be progressively improved as it goes along. The importance of this iterative process will be detailed and augmented in the chapter 4. Each criterion needs to be defined and clarified, as related to the specific mechanism of merging resources from DoS and USSOCOM in conflict prevention.

1. Education: this criterion is crucial, as it constitutes the initial step to focus on when it comes to analyzing the synchronization cycle between both organizations. Education contains the recruitment phase, the teaching of core values peculiar to each organization, transverse professional assignments of members from one organization into the other one, as well as the learning process whose maturation goes all along the career path of SOF or DoS personnel (junior, intermediate and senior educations).

2. Training: whereas the education criteria remains generic and non-specifically oriented, Training is tied to a specific objective, and is to be performed with the goal of

preparing members of an organization for certain types of mission, with identified desired end states. This criterion refers to specific courses dedicated to enhance the mutual understanding, the interoperability and the unity of effort of SOF and DoS personnel.

3. Planning: In the wake of the Training, this criterion is also oriented toward the realization of specific objectives, but with a much more detailed focus. Actually, the Planning phase is directly related to solving an identified problem, that lies within a particular context and operational environment, at a specific moment. Here appears the application of a “Design Methodology” through an interagency planning mechanism between SOF and DoS. Furthermore, the research methodology adopted in support of this thesis requires a comprehensive understanding of this Planning criterion at the three stages of its realization: strategic, operational and tactical. This Planning is all the more critical and fundamental in conflict prevention strategies, often characterized by contingency and emergency planning processes.

4. Execution: this fourth and last criterion used to assess the merging mechanism between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention has similar characteristics to Planning. Executing an operation combining diplomatic and SOF capabilities and resources would not have any chance of success without responding to a specific and well identified issue, with a clearly determined and commonly accepted outcome. In some ways, this Execution phase closes the sequential SOF-DoS interagency cycle, focusing on fostering interoperability between both organizations.

This cycle can be outlined through the figure proposed below, specifically elaborated in support of the research process. This figure clarifies the iterative aspect of the interagency process between the SOF and the DoS:

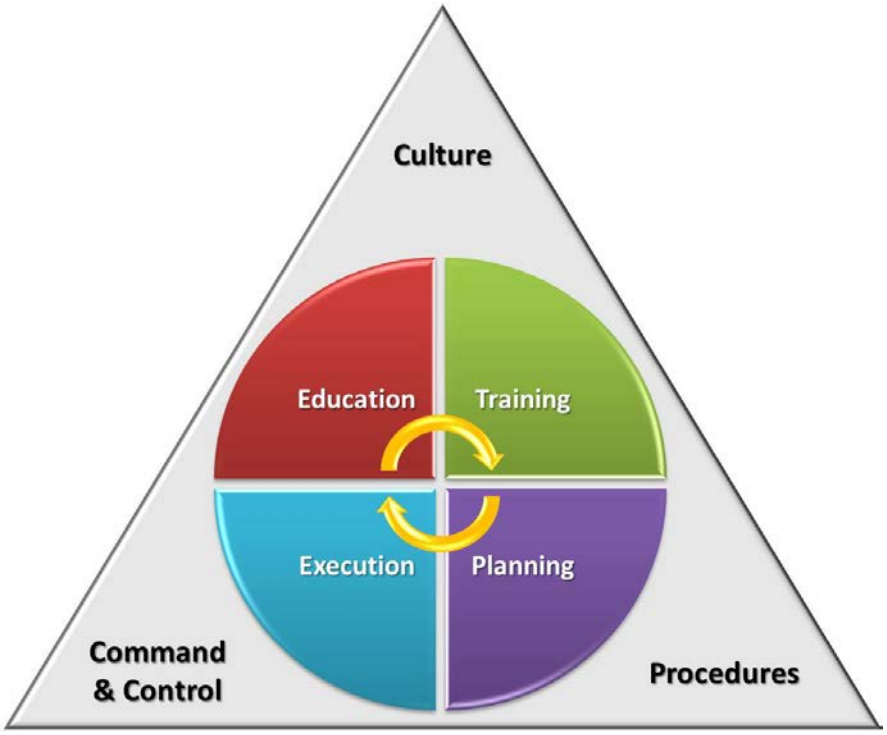

Figure 2. The SOF-DoS synchronization "circle matrix"

Source: Created by author.

As mentioned in this scheme, three other key parameters have been considered in the research process elaborated in support of this thesis: culture, procedures, command and control. These three domains have been selected by the author as meaningful criteria for a better identification of the viability and the relevance of the operational merging process between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention, at each of the four stages previously described in the sequential cycle. When it comes to assessing the chance of success for two different but complementary organizations to unite their efforts and reach a high level of integration, focusing on their own culture, procedures and command and control mechanisms allows for a comprehensive and more objective research process.

In the case of that thesis, these three additional research criteria needs to be defined:

1. Culture: a quite complete and appropriate definition of organizational culture is proposed by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, two professors of Management and Organizations currently teaching at the University of Michigan:

> Organizational culture consists of the values people share, their collective assumptions, and their behavior. It's the way "things are around here." It determines what must be done and what is not allowed. It's the reigning definition of success and failure within a group. It decides who is "in" and who is "out." Culture determines behavior and thus performance.[48]

Assessing the cultural differences, similarities and compatibilities between SOF operators and DoS personnel constitutes a crucial step for a better visualization of the strengths and weaknesses of an interagency merging process in conflict prevention.

2. Procedures: this criterion refers to the several mechanisms already existing in both organizations, in their way to operate in any sort of mission, and to perform conflict prevention strategies. It encompasses a whole set of regulations, doctrines, techniques and mechanisms adopted by SOF and also by DoS in their own domain of expertise. Including an analysis of these procedures comes down to the following question: do SOF and DoS already possess the appropriate procedural framework and the professional mechanisms for enhancing their interoperability, from the strategic planning process down to the lowest levels of execution, in conflict prevention?

3. Command and Control: a third filter utilized in the research methodology is related to the way the USSOCOM and the DoS are structurally organized, with a specific

[48]Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, "Organizational Culture: The Key to Your Success," www.ocai-online.com (accessed 12 February 2013).

focus on both chains of command, and on the way they attribute responsibilities when it comes to executing operations on the ground. How the command and control process is already working in each organization? What are the mechanisms established in support of any temporary and purposely integrated process between SOF and DoS in Phase 0–Shape? Where are the command and control "bridging" opportunities between these two parallel chains of command? Are the current command structures robust enough for supporting a more significant merging process in a near future? Or are there some gaps even obstacles that need to be handled?

Qualitative research

Most of the information collected in support of the thesis have been gained and exploited through a qualitative process. This research design has been elaborated through three different but very complementary methodologies: publications analyses, interviews and surveys. In addition, every method has been performed through three perspectives: the DoS perspective, the SOF one, but also the reciprocal perceptions between both organizations. For instance, each of the two surveys performed were aimed at determining the own trends from each organization (one survey focusing on the SOF considerations, and the other on the DoS ones), while including a final part where members from each organization had to express their perception of the other one.

Because of the sensitivity of that topic related to foreign policy and special operations, as mentioned in the first chapter (Limitations),[49] all documentation analyzed has been accessed through open sources. Most of the relevant publications considered in

[49]See the paragraph "Limitations," chapter 1, 10.

that research process are those described in the previous chapter. The insights in support of the thesis were valuable and raised additional unanswered questions this thesis intends to focus on later as described in chapter 4 and chapter 5. They have been mentioned in the "Literature Review" due to the depth and the wide spectrum of domains they cover. However, several other publications have provided very relevant and detailed thoughts on some specific topics, partly contributing to the research process.

More than publications whose analysis does not allow an interactive and dynamic research process, interviews have been identified as key enablers for getting access to appropriate information directly related to the thesis. Therefore, it was intended that interviews with key personnel belonging to both organizations: SOF community and DoS would be conducted. In addition, other interviews have been planned with civilian academic experts, whose publications have demonstrated the value of their knowledge, their opinion and their vision in relation to the topic studied. However, probably for confidentiality reasons, no requests for interviews with key SOF personnel were accepted. Therefore, the five interviews performed targeted three personnel from the DoS, one from the SOF community, and a civilian expert and academic researcher, whose SOF background has provided an alternative way to fill the lack of perspective from active duty SOF personnel. These interviews have been conducted as follows: three of them were face-to-face meetings with members from the DoS in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and in Washington DC, and the two other interviews were performed by electronic mails. Two interviews were done at the United States Army Command and General Staff College. The first one was the DoS Faculty advisor, and the second one an interagency student integrated within the Command and General Staff Officer Course

(CGSOC), Class 13-01. Both had direct professional experience with SOF personnel in overseas operations, quite recently. Therefore, their insights were very valuable in support of the thesis.

The author also had the precious opportunity to be received at the State Department, in Washington DC., and more specifically within the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO), previously described in chapter 1. Due to his current position as the responsible for civil-military partnerships within the CSO, Dr. Kurt E. Müller provided very relevant information in support of this thesis. Key results and thoughts obtained from these three interviews with members from the DoS will be directly integrated within the analysis elaborated in the next chapter.

Two additional interviews were conducted by electronic mails with Homer Harkins and Dr. Kevin D. Stringer. Homer Harkins is the chief of the Interagency Education at the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU). Dr. Stringer is currently acting as the Associate Academic Director and Chair, Walker School of Business and Technology at Webster University in Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Stringer's career path has already been mentioned in Chapter 2, Literature Review. Due to their professional expertise with the interagency process, interviewing them proved to be all the more beneficial.

At the crossroads of qualitative and quantitative research processes: the surveys

Beside documents analyses and interviews, the research methodology included two surveys, performed among a part of the officer students from the CGSOC, Class 13-01. In order to better assess the differences and similarities between the SOF and the

DoS, and to identify opportunities of interagency synchronization, the two following populations have been surveyed by two different but complementary questionnaires: field-grade officers belong to the SOF community, and all the interagency students are from the DoS. These two surveys were generated by the author, and then issued to the targeted audiences under the supervision of the Quality Assurance Office (QAO), Dean of Academics, U.S. Army CGSC. During two weeks in mid-march 2013, all the SOF officers and interagency students had the opportunity to access to their respective survey online, through a secured internet site hosted by the CGSC.

Survey among the Special Operations Forces officers

The survey was reviewed and approved by the CGSC Human Protections Administrator under the number #13-03-055. This survey targeted an audience of about 60 field-grade SOF officers from CGSOC Class 13-01. Of this number, 31 officers agreed to complete the online survey, made up of 14 questions. A copy of the questions asked in this survey are included in Appendix A. The international officers also belonging to the SOF branch in their respective countries were also invited to be part of that survey, that remained "voluntary and confidential,"[50] as explicitly mentioned in its welcoming page. The population surveyed represented more than 50 percent of the CGSOC overall cohort of SOF officers, and included 4 international SOF officers.

The first phase of the questionnaire, from included question #2/14 to question #6/14, focused on the experience the surveyed officer would have potentially had with DoS personnel, whether it was in overseas operations, in COCOM Headquarters, or in a

[50]See page 93.

Continental U.S. (CONUS) assignment. Therefore, this interagency experience would be scrutinized in terms of level of performance (tactical, operational and/or strategic), operational phase considered (conflict prevention, crisis management and/or stabilization process), type of special operation supported (eleven kinds of operation identified),[51] while assessing the interagency process in each of these special operations whether it was in a planning phase, an execution phase.

Eleven SOF officers declared that they never had any professional experience shared with the DoS, representing 35 percent of the population surveyed. However, the survey allowed this quite significant ratio of officers to be usefully questioned on their perception and their willingness about the interagency process between SOF and DoS in operations. Therefore, as they answered "No, I have not" to the question #2/14 "In a Special Operations Forces (SOF) assignment, have you worked with a member from the Department of State (DoS)? For International SOF officers, have you worked with diplomats from your country?," these officers were automatically redirected to the question #7/14.

The second and last part of the survey, from included question #7/14 to question #14/14, proposed a prospective approach. The SOF officers were thus encouraged to provide assumptions, personal opinions and perceptions about the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations. The intent of this phase was to better determine what SOF officers would consider as the major benefits and strengths, but also weaknesses and constraints in this interagency process. As previously mentioned in the

[51]See Appendix B, question #6/14, for getting the details of the different types of special operations considered in the survey elaborated for SOF officers.

"circle matrix" represented in figure 2,[52] the surveyed officers also had to filter their answers through the four identified criteria: education, training, planning, and execution.

Lastly, the two questions #10/14 and #11/14 introduced a qualitative research process about the perceptions the SOF officers have in terms of organizational cultures about their own organization, the SOF community, and the State Department. This assessment tool is directly inspired from the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) model as proposed by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn.[53] This model of survey intends to better assess a cultural trend within an organization by asking the surveyed officers to assess their own SOF culture, and then their perceptions of the DoS culture, by choosing one of the four culture types: Clan culture, Adhocracy culture, Market culture, or Hierarchy culture. The intent of this OCAI model is to better identify the discrepancies, the misunderstandings as well as the similarities and compatibilities between both organizational cultures.

These four types of organizational cultures have been defined within the questionnaire as follows, in order to facilitate the surveyed population's understanding:[54]

1. Clan culture: teamwork, participation and consensus at every level of command are encouraged before making any decision. The organization is highly committed to its people. Leaders are seen as team builders and mentors.

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[52]See page 37.

[53]Kim S. Cameron, and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1999).

[54]See Appendix B, question #10/14; Appendix C, question #11/16.

2. Adhocracy culture: innovation, creative thinking as well as “out of the box” thinking are promoted. Leaders are therefore considered as innovators and risk-takers.
3. Market culture: the organization is based on a competitive mindset. Expectations are high to get things done. Mission achievement prevails over any other consideration.
4. Hierarchy culture: the work environment is structured. The organization requires people to strictly adhere to orders. Formal tasks and procedures must be smoothly executed.

Survey among the Department of State interagency students

All of the six DoS students of the CGSOC Class 13-01 answered to the second questionnaire, reviewed and approved by the CGSC Human Protections Administrator under the number #13-03-056. A copy of all the questions asked in this survey appears in Appendix C. This survey was made accessible online under the same conditions as the first one targeting the SOF officer population, in the same time limit. Composed of 16 questions, this survey was almost similar in its structure, its content and its intent to the one dedicated to SOF officers. Even if 100 percent of the audience targeted had answered the questionnaire, the results later explained in chapter 4 must be interpreted with hindsight due to the very low number of DoS interagency students involved in the process. However, in spite of the limited sample they represent, the thoughts and feedbacks gained from these six students are highly valuable thanks to the knowledge and cultural awareness they had already gained after more than eight months fully embedded within a military professional education environment.

Similarly to the survey for SOF officers, the first part of the questionnaire, from included question #1/16 to question #7/16, focused on the shared professional experiences the DoS personnel might have had with the SOF. Therefore, the different questions asked intended to determine the operational and contextual frameworks of such potential experience, as well as the level of performance. Two out of the six DoS students surveyed had never had an opportunity to work beside SOF personnel. They were automatically redirected to the second part of the questionnaire made up of 9 questions, from included question #8/16. As in the survey for SOF officers, this last phase of the questionnaire focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the interagency process between both agencies, from their organization perspective.

Adopting a similar way to survey both the SOF and DoS populations has provided a meaningful and helpful way to better compare both levels of experiences, expectations, and perceptions. Such a parallel process was all the more relevant when it comes to analyzing and merging the results from the OCAI model, applied to both audiences.

The most relevant, appropriate and meaningful information gained from these two parallel surveys is described and explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

> Smart power requires smart people. We've got the smart people. We just need the smart procedures that will enable the smart people to do the work that we expect.[55]
>
> — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

Based on the literature previously reviewed in chapter 2, and on the research methodology applied, this chapter assesses in depth the robustness of the ongoing merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention. The arguments detailed in the following pages are expected to provide clear answers to the primary research question: Can the cutting-edge interagency ambition to implement commando-diplomat teams down to the tactical level be successfully applied in support of conflict prevention strategies?

This comprehensive analysis is designed to provide an assessment of the current weaknesses, strengths and opportunities of such an interagency goal. Personal recommendations proposed by the author for enhancing and optimizing the chance of success for this combined process will be formulated in the following and last chapter. In order to maintain a coherent line of thought all along this line of analysis, the several arguments scrutinized are categorized accordingly to the research criteria previously mentioned in the circle matrix, in the previous chapter: education, training, planning, and execution[56] Following a guiding principle helps understand, visualize and describe the

[55]Hillary Rodham Clinton, U.S. Secretary of State, "Address to U.S. Agency for International Development employees" (Washington, DC, 23 January 2009).

[56]See figure 2, The SOF-DoS synchronization assessment 'circle matrix.'

merging process between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention as a whole iterative cycle, while ensuring a clear correlation between the current state of play (chapter 4), and the recommendations made (chapter 5) to overcome the constraints identified.

An objective, deep and broad assessment of the existing interagency operational process linking DoS personnel to the SOF, whether it is in conflict prevention or in stabilization operations, tends to underline several weaknesses. Persistence of such deficiencies might seriously undermine the likelihood of achieving a high-level of synchronization and integration between both organizations. These vulnerabilities are mainly due to differences, absences, and misconceptions. Here are some examples of the weaknesses identified and later described: differences in any clear Command and Control scheme or in the quality and quantity of the resources dedicated, absences of any purposeful interagency training, as well as misconceptions in terms of each organization's culture and abilities.

Furthermore, this state of play intends to pinpoint the realistic strengths and opportunities discovered during the research process. Identifying them and promoting their consolidation and exploitation are key criteria for fostering the merging process between SOF and DoS. In addition, at the outset of this chapter it is worth revealing that the idea that SOF were considered as the "most compatible military units to operate with," was declared by 80 percent of the DoS students surveyed.[57]

[57]See Appendix C, Survey for Department of State students, CGSOC Class 13-01, question #15/16.

A biased and incomplete Education process

The first step in the interagency "circle matrix," the "education" process is of crucial importance. The way this function is performed and encouraged will have direct impact on the conduct of the three following phases: the Training, the Planning, and then the Execution. The education framework as currently developed by both DoS and SOF authorities does not comply with all the fundamental criteria for a successful interagency process, in particular in the following domains: culture, mentalities, and inter-organization assignments.

Cultural education

The organizational culture can be considered as a fundamental parameter to scrutinize when it comes to assessing the abilities for two separate organizations to fuse their peculiar visions and combine their efforts. The education phase represents an essential and preferred way to make an organizational culture compatible with another one. This priority role played by education in the interagency process has been widely studied by Colonel Hildner, a US Army officer who published the following Strategy Research Project: "Interagency Reform: Changing Organizational Culture through Education and Assignment." He emphasizes the necessity to consider these military and diplomatic cultural identities as a priority, warning that "military failure to recognize and accommodate this [cultural] difference while interacting with DoS will hamper both organizations' ability to achieve consensus on a strategy for a security issue."[58]

[58]Terence J. Hildner, "Interagency Reform: Changing Organizational Culture Through Education and Assignment" (Strategy Research Project, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, March 2007), 9.

Answers obtained from the two surveys performed among SOF officers and DoS students have provided significant and valuable insights about cultural differences between both organizations. The application of the OCAI model allows the researcher to identify the key cultural traits for SOF and DoS personnel. The results from questions #10/14 and #11/14 for the survey to SOF officers, and questions #11/16 and #12/16 for the DoS students' one, reveal how far representatives from both organizations identify obvious differences between their organizational cultures. As depicted below, figure 3 shows the results of the perceptions SOF officers have about their own culture and about their DoS counterparts.

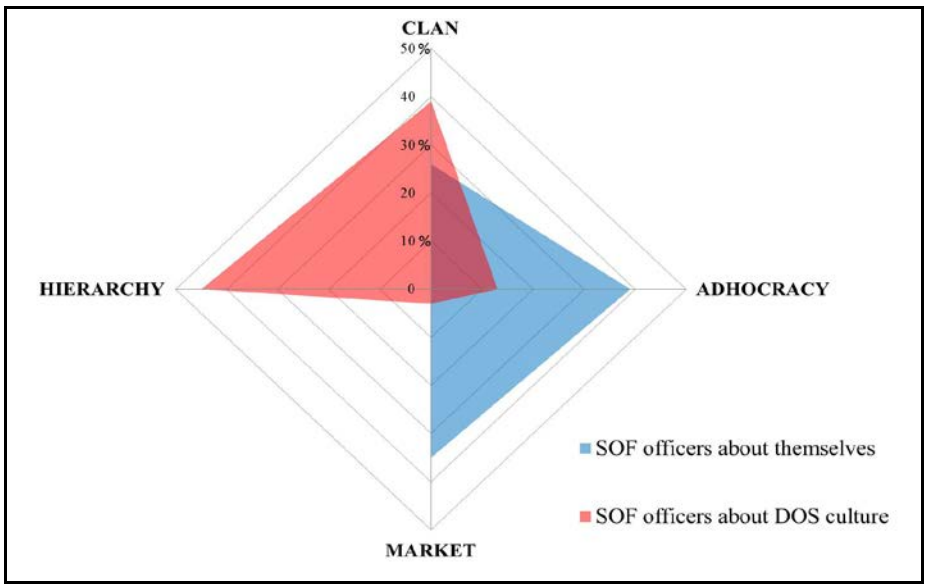

Figure 3. SOF officers' perception about their own organizational culture, and about the DoS one

Source: Created by author, inspired from the OCAI model, as developed by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1999).

It is worth noting that the "Hierarchy culture," usually considered as a major cultural trait for military organizations, was never mentioned by any of the 31 SOF officers surveyed, who however attributed this Hierarchy culture as the first cultural trait for their DoS colleagues. The DoS students perception about their own organizational culture and the SOF one is described below, in figure 4. DoS personnel tend to primarily consider their own culture as based on a "clan" system, where team building and transverse communication are core values. They mostly perceive the SOF culture as a balanced combination of hierarchic and adhocratic traits.

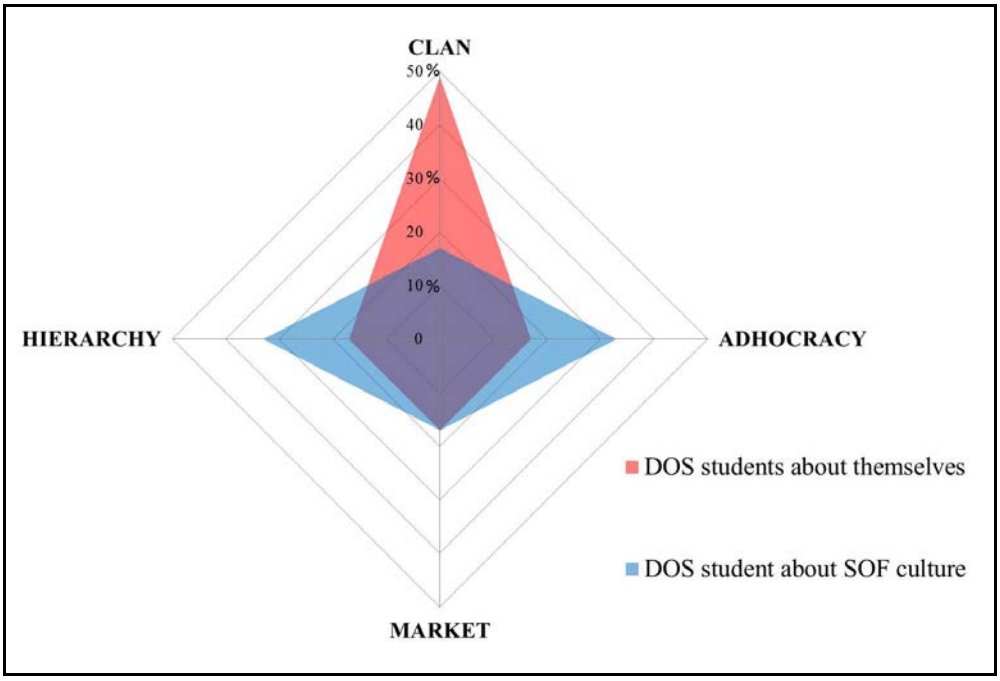

Figure 4. DoS students' perception about their own organizational culture, and about the SOF one

Source: Created by author, inspired by the OCAI model, as developed by Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1999).

These results obtained from SOF officers and DoS students prove that three out of four cultural models prevail for characterizing both organizations: Hierarchy culture, Clan culture, and Adhocracy culture. The Market culture does not seem consensual, probably because of the competitiveness mindset it induces, that could be considered as a hindering factor for enhancing each organization's open-mindedness to interagency integration.

However, a real challenge persists and needs to be overcome in order to maximize the chance of successfully merging SOF and DoS resources down to the tactical level: cultural bias. Both figures 3 and 4 show the discrepancy between the perception each organization has from its own culture, and the mutual assessment of the other organization's cultural model. The education process as applied in the DoS and in the SOF communities must minimize the dangers of cultural bias ingrained in the mentalities. Being able to educate personnel from both organizations about the real cultural traits of their counterparts is a crucial first step in the interagency process.

However, opposite perceptions of both cultures do not automatically sound the death knell of any compatibility between them. SOF officers recognize what they consider as cultural differences with DoS personnel. These differences could be considered as precious opportunities to exploit for leveraging the cultural and thus operational complementarily between SOF and DoS, in a wide variety of situations and contexts. Susan Doman, the CGSC DoS Faculty Advisor, who had professional experiences with SOF officers at the tactical level in South America, emphasized the cultural compatibilities between the diplomats and their SOF partners, whose "commonly

overlapped and shared culture" has significantly empowered the integration process on the ground.[59]

Moreover, cultural differences are also observable within a same organization, adding more complexity to the education process. Made up of several bureaus whose cultural orientation might diverge quite significantly regarding their respective regional or functional expertise, the DoS illustrates this internal diversity. In the same vein, the SOF community also tends to prove a sort of cultural singularity within the military.[60] An interview performed with an interagency DoS student from the CGSOC Class 13-01 provided additional arguments in favor of the "cultural exception" prevailing in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO).[61] The CSO cultivates an "expeditionary mindset," a relevant opportunity for fostering reciprocal understanding with SOF partners.

Considered as a reference work about the American interagency process, *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, written by Marc Grossman, dedicates a whole chapter to the influence of culture on the way DoS shapes its interagency policy. He appropriately mentioned the singularity of the "kaleidoscopic"

[59]Susan Doman, DoS Faculty Advisor, Interview by author, Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 25 February 2013.

[60]See the results obtained in figure 3, where SOF officers never considered their own cultural model as a 'hierarchic' one, although it logically represents a cultural backbone for the military.

[61]An interagency DoS student from CGSOC Class 13-01, Interview by author, Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 7 March 2013.

culture within the State Department.[62] Such a statement may argue in favor of the compatibility between SOF and DoS, whose "kaleidoscopic" culture may also be synonymous with adaptability and "flexibility in mind," therefore converging with the cultural traits of the SOF.

Shaping the mentalities

In the wake of these cultural orientations as perceived in both organizations, acting on the mentalities is a second aspect to assess when it comes to analyzing the education phase in the interagency process between SOF and DoS. In order to assess this educational process in a much more comprehensive manner, such influence and shaping operations over mentalities have to be performed not only horizontally but also vertically.

An horizontal education process can act on reciprocal perceptions between both organizations: the challenge is thus to be able to mold the mentalities of DoS and SOF personnel, with the intent to make them more compatible. Whenever two disparate organizations have to combine their effort down to the lowest levels of execution, such an horizontal process would maximize the likelihood of fluidity, mutual understanding and synergy. The educational system as currently existing within DoS and SOF does not seem to be sufficiently oriented toward improved mutual perceptions.

Obviously, the education phase includes the recruitment steps, the initial and basic trainings, as well as the junior and senior learning processes. The Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) currently serves as an encouraging educational platform

[62]Marc Grossman, "The State Department: Culture as Interagency Destiny?" in *The National Security Enterprise: Navigating the Labyrinth*, eds. Roger Z. George and Harvey Rishikof (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 79.

for infusing students from other U.S. agencies with the SOF culture, but also the SOF procedures. Co-located with the USSOCOM at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, the JSOU is increasing its influence over the American but also the international SOF communities, while favoring efforts for the integration of more civilian experts from other governmental organizations. Currently serving as the Chief of the JSOU Interagency Education, Mr. Homer Harkins has provided valuable arguments to better assess the way SOF officers and DoS personnel may be educated together on operational issues.[63] His observations are quite mixed, but include the willingness to improve the existing SOF-DoS interagency educational process. However, the reality is quite frustrating and tends to prove that more significant efforts are required to really reach a step further. The JSOU proposed a whole education program for interagency students, and seems to be considered by those who extensively studied the interagency education system as the only one to propose such a comprehensive way. The JSOU includes interagency coordination classes in every irregular warfare and operational planning course. However, the frustrating aspect of this educational process is the very low ratio of non-military students, who barely represent 2 percent of the 5,000 students linked to the JSOU each year. Unfortunately, this ratio has not been increasing since the Interagency program's inception in 2006. And among this very low ratio of interagency students, only 10 percent of them are coming from the DoS. On the DoS side, quite similar interagency courses are proposed by the Foreign Service Institute (FSI), the main educational platform for the DoS. Nevertheless, it seems that only 1 percent of the diplomats would

[63]Harkins Homer, Joint Special Operations University, correspondence with author, 2 May 2013.

attend the classes related to the interagency process between DoS and the military. Therefore, Mr. Harkins recognizes that a critical gap still remains in terms of education between SOF and DoS personnel: "interagency collaboration is a clear knowledge competency gap. There are few education venues where SOF and diplomats interface."[64]

In addition, the importance of progressively transferring more attention and a higher priority to conflict prevention strategies remain underestimated in both educational platforms. The practical exercise developed by the JSOU in its SOF-Interagency Collaboration course only addresses "conflict reaction," while the FSI only offers one course related to conflict prevention out of more than 700: "Foundations in Conflict Prevention and Response," a two weeks long program.[65] Furthermore, the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations never sent any of its members to a JSOU course.[66]

The researcher had the opportunity to attend a course dedicated to Special Operations, integrated within the academic curriculum of the CGSOC at Fort Leavenworth. During this two weeks-long block of instruction, an interagency student from the DoS was integrated into the class made up of SOF officers. This person's next assignment is slated to be as a DoS Liaison Officer in the USSOCOM Headquarters. Even if it is an individual case, such an example helps set the conditions for improved mutual understanding and cultural compatibility between actors from both organizations. This program is an indication of more opportunities to merge their respective resources

[64]Ibid.

[65]Foreign Service Institute, *Course Catalog FY2012–FY2013*, George P. Shultz National Foreign Affairs Training Center, 251.

[66]Dr. Kurt E Müller, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, Department of State, Interview with author, 19 April 2013.

and willingness to improve joint education in a near future. In addition, every SOF officer attending the CGSOC resident course had the opportunity to apply for an Interagency Master's program at Kansas University, financed by the USSOCOM.

Lastly, if the military's intermediate level education tends to better promote an interagency culture common to SOF and DoS personnel, as depicted above in the US Army CGSOC case, junior level education opportunities also represent a key (and initial) step in that process. Dr. Kurt E. Müller, from the CSO, mentioned regular sessions of SOF operators with DoS personnel in Washington D.C., as part of the education they receive at the U.S. Army John Fitzgerald Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (JFKSWCS). [67] Considered as the most complete SOF educational platform, and placed under the command of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), the JFKSWCS oversees the systematic participation of interagency students (mostly from national intelligence agencies, and DoS) as part of its curriculum. Within the first Special Warfare Training Group, the 6th Battalion takes the lead on most of the courses including DoS personnel, who are educated alongside their SOF counterparts. This battalion:

> Trains and educates Green Berets, joint special-operations forces and other selected interagency personnel to conduct specialized intelligence and operational activities in order to provide them an unmatched capability to understand and address the diverse threats of the 21st century.[68]

Unlike the horizontal process whose goal is to empower an interagency and adhoc mentality between SOF and DoS, the vertical education system applies within the boundaries of each organization. Therefore, the intent is to assure that everyone is willing

[67]Ibid.

[68]US Army John Fitzgerald Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, *Academic Handbook 2012*, 8.

and able to speak a common language, and to understand to the organization's priorities. On that point, it is interesting to note that the SOF and DoS populations surveyed during the research process perceive differently the importance of merging SOF and DoS resources in the conflict prevention phases. However, authorities from USSOCOM and DoS regularly stress the necessity to improve the way to act by anticipating interagency coordination issues. The figure below shows the results obtained from both audiences to the following question: "During which operational phase would you consider the use of a close and strong collaboration between SOF units and personnel from the Department of State as essential? Choose one."

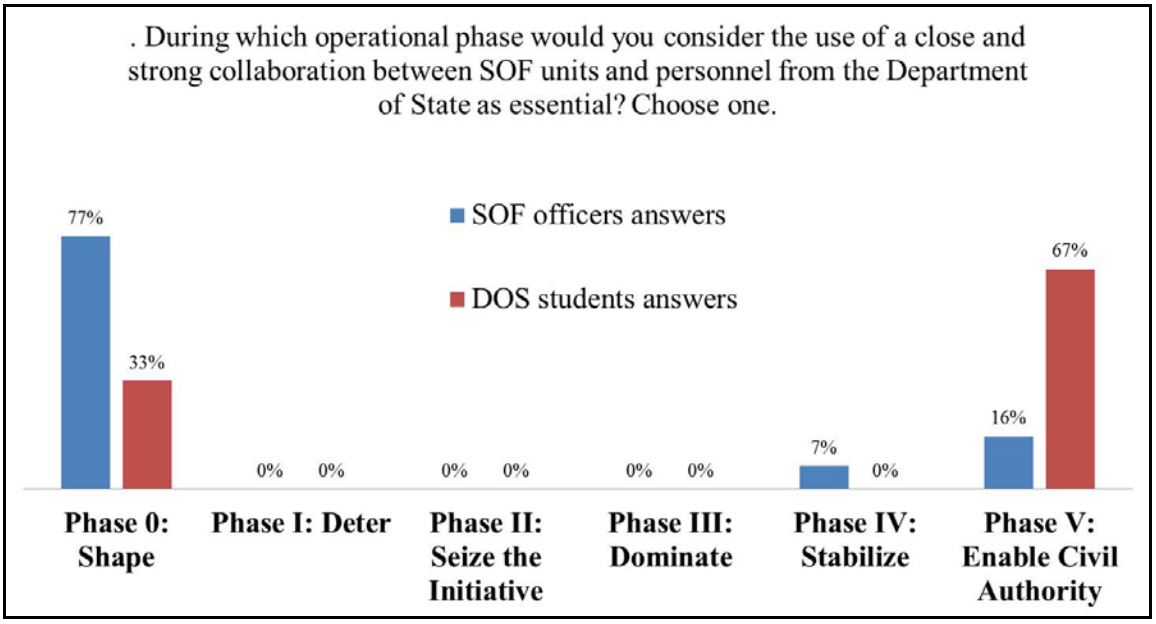

Figure 5. Assessing the necessity of a close collaboration between SOF and DoS by operational phase

Source: Created by author.

Such results better indicate a tendency for discrepancies in perceptions between personnel from both organizations, but also demonstrate that DoS personnel do not seem convinced about the necessity to foster the interagency process in conflict prevention. These considerations from the surveyed DoS members would seem justified by interagency habits progressively ingrained over the past two decades through post-conflict experiences: stabilization and state-building activities in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. A crucial question is thus raised: how to vertically educate diplomats within the DoS in order for them to mentally integrate the crucial necessity to shift a greater priority to conflict prevention? On this matter, in spite of its limited resources and its recent implementation, the CSO has a key-role to play with the whole DoS organization, in order to better prepare and shape the mentalities, for them to be more compatible with future shared operational challenges.

A parsimonious cross-assignments process?

A final aspect to consider about the role played by education in the collaboration process between SOF and DoS is the importance given to transverse assignments between both organizations. USSOCOM recently gave greater impetus to a more significant and visible SOF representation among the main U.S. government agencies. As of February 2011, 30 Special Operations Support Teams (SOST) were already embedded within 18 different agencies in the National Capital Region.[69] In late March 2013, during the USSOCOM testimony before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, Admiral

[69]U.S. Special Operations Command, "Special Operations Support Teams–SOSTs" (Briefing, MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida, 8 February 2011), slide #5/6, http://www.dtic.mil/ndia/2011SOLIC/Tues2Moore.pdf (accessed 22 April 2013).

McRaven mentioned his intent to strengthen SOF presence in the interagency arena at the strategic level. The USSOCOM-NCR (National Capital Region) initiative, dedicated to significantly empower a 'SOF network,' is a dynamic program to ensure "that the perspectives and capabilities of interagency . . . partners are incorporated into all phases of SOF planning efforts."[70]

While the SOF leadership clearly has integrated the necessity to widen the bridges toward other major agencies such as the DoS, it is however quite unfortunate to observe the marginal representation of active duty military personnel currently serving within the CSO. This key bureau, that could be considered as the DoS spearhead for interagency process beside DoD and SOF in overseas operations, only integrates in its ranks three active duty military, three reservists, as well as a dozen of retired military, most of them without any SOF background.[71]

A quasi-nonexisting SOF-DoS training structure

> Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.[72]

A logical follow-on to an incomplete education process as previously described, is the training program, as part of the Interagency circle matrix. This is probably the most

[70]Admiral William McRaven, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, "Posture Statement Before the 113th Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee," 5 March 2013, www.fas.org/irp/congress/2013_hr/030513mcraven.pdf (accessed 11 April 2013), 7.

[71]Müller, Interview.

[72]Aristotle

critical area where the most significant deficiencies remain, in terms of SOF-DoS synchronization. Both SOF and DoS audiences, surveyed in support of the thesis, recognize a near total absence of common training. Figure 6 below depicts the results of the question asked to both populations: "Which area would you assess as currently the most successful one in terms of close collaboration between SOF operators and DoS personnel?."

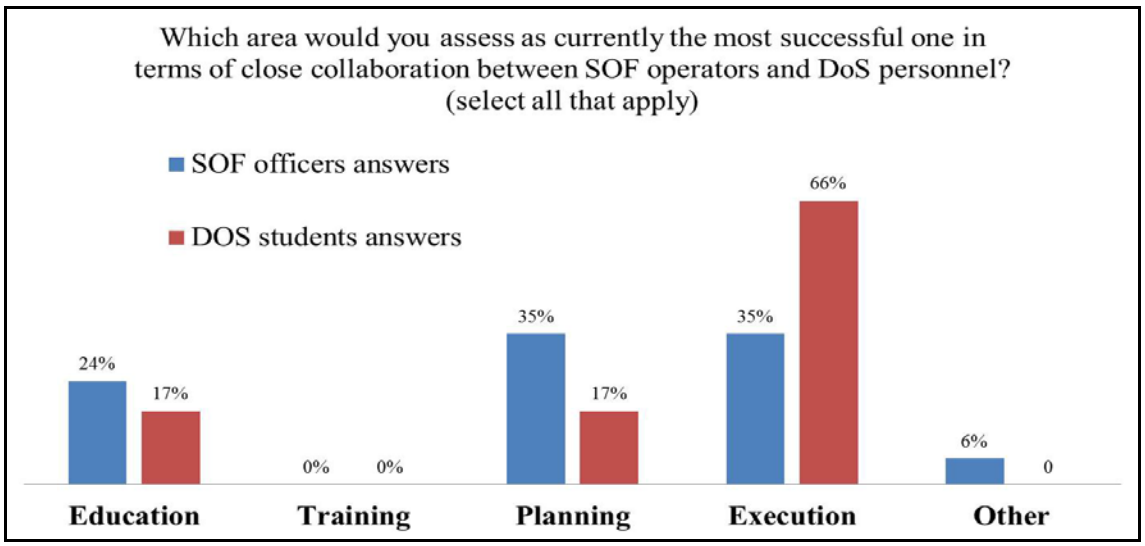

Figure 6. Assessing the performance of SOF-DoS collaboration by phase within the Interagency cycle

Source: Created by author.

If the Training phase is clearly assessed as the least successful one, it mainly seems due to its quasi-nonexistence, specifically over the past ten years. Most of the SOF officers surveyed had had several opportunities to plan and execute operations overseas. Although considerably increasing their professional experience and "irregular warfare" expertise, the very high operational tempo these officers have been subjected to in

Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom has significantly reduced opportunities for common training beside DoS partners. In addition, the high level of tactical and technical expertise required by most of the Counter-Insurgency (COIN) and Counter-Terrorism (CT) special operations forces, as applied in Afghanistan and Iraq, has put the training process with DoS personnel in the background.

Educating is definitely not training in terms of preparing to operate in a dangerous and complex combat environment. Improving the educational process between SOF and DoS could not fill the critical void of any systematic and robust interagency field training. Moreover, without a training regimen to support an encouraging but still incomplete education process, the foundations cannot be laid for a successful interagency effort between SOF and DoS, especially when it comes to planning and executing common operations down to the tactical level.

An objective assessment of the current interagency process between SOF and DoS regarding education and training indicates that both organizations do not seem ready to promptly reach a significant level of collaboration and synchronization in conflict prevention. Such a statement would not be so pessimistic for stabilization operations, due to the experiences SOF and DoS personnel shared in the specific domains of Iraq and Afghanistan. Even if members from both organizations tend to objectively question the real performance of interagency structures such as the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) or Village Stability Operations (VSO), they created positive platforms where synergy in planning and execution mitigated the repercussions of an incomplete education and training.

The challenge of training is all the more essential as many indicators seem to converge toward the fact the U.S. armed forces are very likely to be less committed overseas on large-scale operations in a near future. U.S. authorities do not seem willing to commit to future military deployments as simultaneously conducted in Afghanistan and Iraq over the past ten years. Revising the expeditionary ambitions of the U.S. armed forces downwards would automatically mean more time to conduct training in garrison. Even if this unaccustomed operational sedentarity would mainly effect the conventional forces, SOF are also expected to be impacted by a major shift in time deployed after more than a decade of intensive engagements. Therefore, a positive consequence would be for the SOF to get more opportunities for improving interagency training with DoS personnel, in preparation of the pre-conflict operations they will certainly perform on a much more regular basis.

Putting existing planning frameworks to the test: A non-negotiable prerequisite

As mentioned by the former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2009, having the "smart people" in an organization remains useless as long as "smart procedures" are not implemented.[73] This observation is all the more relevant for the interagency process. Two disparate organizations whose mutual ambition is to synchronize even merge their efforts need to create reciprocal procedural bridges, an absolute prerequisite for an integrated planning process. Assessing the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention requires scrutiny of the planning phase, the third step in

[73]See page 47.

the interagency cycle as depicted in the circle matrix (figure 2).[74] Putting to the test the robustness of the planning mechanisms between SOF and DoS amounts to answering to the following questions: is there enough linearity, coherence, and fluidity in the planning process from the strategic level down to the tactical one? Is there an operational planning and decision-making process common to both organizations?

At first sight, the framework for an effective interagency planning process between DoS personnel and their military partners seems robust and interactive enough. Several efforts have already been made in the course of successive lessons learned from the Afghan and Iraqi experiences. The JP 3-08 *Interorganizational Coordination during Joint Operations*,[75] demonstrates a reassuring planning process where personnel from both agencies get several opportunities to discuss, develop and plan common courses of action, synchronizing diplomatic actions with security operations. Such opportunities primarily exist at the strategic and operational levels. Directly supervised by Presidential authority, the National Security Council (NSC) serves as the supreme interagency platform. The recent strengthening of SOF Liaison and Advising teams in the National Capital Region would probably reinforce the USSOCOM's visibility and influence. The role played by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC) is particularly crucial in the initial steps of such planning, where special operations and diplomatic actions must be synchronized. Michael A. Sheehan, the current ASD SO/LIC, whose professional background melds both SOF

[74]See figure 2.

[75]Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-08, *Interorganizational Coordination during Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 24 June 2011).

and diplomatic experiences, personifies the need for greater emphasis on merging the human resources from both organizations for "high reward low cost" operations.

At the operational level, an overall review of the platforms and procedures for interagency planning indicates that many structures already exist. The interagency experience gained over the past ten years has fostered the implementation and the use of reciprocal planning frameworks between DoS and SOF at the operational level. Interagency programs such as the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), the Village Stability Operations (VSO), or also the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF) are all tried and tested concepts. These three programs regularly include SOF personnel working beside their DoS counterparts. However, as this thesis is focusing on conflict prevention strategies, it is worth noting that most of these existing and quite successful planning tools mainly (if not exclusively) focus on the crisis management phase, as well as the stabilization and reconstruction. The PRT program as applied in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the VSO as currently performed in Operation Enduring Freedom, have significantly helped in developing a crucial expertise between SOF and DoS in reconstruction and transition phases.

Once again, some gaps persist when it comes to building an interagency processes only dedicated to tackle the initial steps of an escalating crisis. This planning phase seems to remain under-considered, although assessed as a crucial priority for leveraging the DoS and SOF abilities in conflict prevention. Out of the four phases identified in the interagency cycle (figure 2),[76] the planning tends to be acknowledged as the one where most of the efforts should be maintained in a near future. This was specifically mentioned

[76]See figure 2.

by Dr. Kurt E. Müller, the person in charge of the civil-military partnerships within the CSO, State Department.[77] Therefore, how to develop and sustain an appropriate planning tool and expertise between SOF and DoS, specifically tailored to conflict prevention operations becomes a key question. Are there existing planning structures and mechanisms that could be exploited, and adjusted to the particularities of Phase 0?

The ICAF structure is a relevant planning framework to consider. It seems to be the only robust interagency planning framework already existing that clearly focus on Phase 0: Shape type issues. The ICAF has mostly been designed to provide strategic-level policy makers and operational-level leaders (COCOMs or Ambassadors) with a tool designed to understand in depth a complex problem identified in any part of the world. The best way to define this planning process is to refer to the explanations provided by one of its main originators, Dr. Cynthia Irmer, currently serving as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights. Prior to that position, she was the Senior Conflict Prevention Officer in the Department of State's S/CRS (predecessor of CSO):

> The ICAF process is a pre-design event–it places enormous effort on extracting participants' thought processes from the linear, problem/solution paradigm and engaging them in a process reflective of and compatible with complex, adaptive systems. The result is an improved, because better informed and better thought-through, collective understanding of the situation and basis for going forward with coordinated whole-of-government strategic planning or individual agency program design. . . . For the military, particularly those engaged in "irregular warfare," application of the ICAF assists in framing, assessing and engaging

[77]Müller, Interview.

situations from a perspective other than problem/solution, opening up possibilities to genuine, sustainable human security.[78]

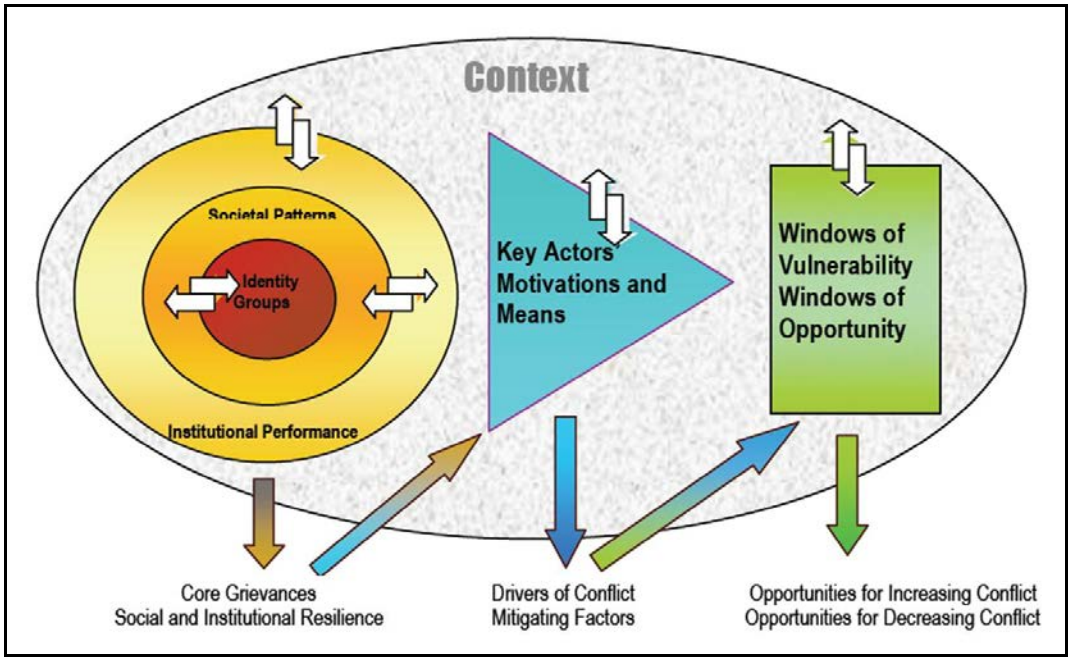

Figure 7. The Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF)

Source: Cynthia Irmer, Ph D., "A Systems Approach and the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF)," *The Corwallis Group XIV: Analysis of Societal Conflict and Counter-Insurgency* (2010), Figure 1, 171.

The ICAF planning model is all the more relevant in support of this thesis, as most of the ICAF teams already deployed abroad for conflict assessment missions (usually three week period) have included SOF members. In November 2011, the ICAF fieldwork mission sent to Nepal was comprised of personnel from the USASOC, and the Special Operations Command, Pacific (SOCPAC). Notably, they were the only

[78]Cynthia Irmer, Ph D., "A Systems Approach and the Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF)," *The Corwallis Group XIV: Analysis of Societal Conflict and Counter-Insurgency* (2010): 171.

representatives for the DoD in that interagency team, operating under the leadership of the CSO.[79] Two years earlier, a quite similar crisis-audit mission had been performed in Cambodia, including SOF personnel beside their counterparts from the S/CRS Bureau.[80] SOF contributed to this interagency planning mission through the commitment of military experts belonging to the 97th Civil Affairs Battalion, a subordinate unit from the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, under USASOC command. In Fall 2010, another ICAF interagency planning mission, including two members from the Joint Special Operations Task Force–Philippines (JSOTF-P), conducted a survey in that country. The two SOF personnel involved were the only DoD representatives.[81]

Therefore, the ICAF seems to provide an adequate and encouraging structure for interagency planning in conflict prevention. The systematic inclusion of SOF personnel, acting as the DoD representatives in that process, tends to better prove the significance of merging DoS and SOF resources when it comes to identifying and addressing the root causes of any rising instability in the world. SOF may bring unique and relevant military capabilities in such interagency forum. Many SOF domains of expertise are thus expected to be all the more relevant for shaping the conditions towards stability and security

[79]Department of State, *Nepal ICAF Report* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, November 2011), http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/195295.pdf (accessed 18 February 2013).

[80]Department of State, *Cambodia ICAF Report* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, April 2009), http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/187970.pdf (accessed 19 February 2013).

[81]Department of State, *ICAF Report, Philippines: Looking at Mindanao* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, January 2011), http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/187972.pdf (accessed 19 February 2013).

development in support of a failing government: foreign internal defense (FID), counter-terrorism (CT), military information support operations (MISO), civil affairs (CA), etc.

Other frameworks and decision-making processes than ICAF already exist, demonstrating how far the planning phase in the interagency cycle benefits from the most promising and robust structures. The Crisis Action Planning (CAP) process has become a key component for empowering the synchronization mechanism between DoD and DoS in conflict prevention.[82] This process is especially designed to ensure linearity and coherence between strategic level decisions at the U.S. Government level, and their military application at the operational even tactical levels. Expected to develop a coordinated answer to an identified crisis in a very prompt way, this contingency decision-making process is essential in support of pre-emptive actions jointly executed by diplomats and special operators on the ground. The CAP process has served as the major planning framework for several highly sensitive Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO), where SOF and their DoS counterparts have played the most significant role during the execution phase. Some examples of NEO performed by SOF have been planned through a CAP process: Operation Guardian Retrieval in Zaire (1997), Operation Autumn Return in Côte d'Ivoire (September-October 2002), Operation Shining Express in Liberia (July 2003), or more recently in Central African Republic (December 2012). However, even if NEOs tend to include robust and experienced planning process between

[82]Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 5-0, *Joint Operation Planning* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 11 August 2011), II-31.

SOF and DoS, mostly explained in the doctrinal publication Field Manual 3-05.131,[83] they only narrow the interaction between both organizations to a very specific type of mission, that does not address comprehensively the root causes of a rising conflict.

Lastly, it is indispensable to assess the current proficiency of the planning platform advocated by the COCOM HQs, and to analyze if they really offer a positive environment for fostering interagency processes from the strategic and operational levels, down to tactical one. The research has mainly focused on U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), whose headquarters are supposed to host a strengthened representation from other U.S. government agencies. Out of about 1500 personnel, AFRICOM HQ integrates 30 planners and staff officers from partnered organizations-- about half belong to the State Department.[84] Could it mean that AFRICOM HQ "only pays lip service to interagency integration"?[85] AFRICOM is not unique among the COCOMs. The numbers of personnel from other agencies while somewhat higher, is still insignificant. However, AFRICOM's mission was seen to be less warfighting and more coordinating and advising. That is not to say that its operational environment was not complex and characterized by instabilities. Therefore, AFRICOM should serve as the spearhead among other GCCs in pre-conflict and shaping operations, while emphasizing a greater integration of planning resources from DoS. Moreover, this necessity to empower

[83]Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-05.131, *Army Special Operations Forces Non-combatant Evacuation Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, November 2009).

[84]Kevin D. Stringer, Interview by author, March 2013.

[85]Ibid.

interactions between SOF and DoS through the AFRICOM planning and decision-making has been recently underlined at the U.S. Government level:

> While AFRICOM has Title 10 authorities to conduct traditional military activities and operations, the activities that are most important to the department [DoD] in Africa center around building institutional and operational security capacity and that most of the authorities and funding for these activities belong to State Department programs under Title 22 authorities.[86]

Therefore, the need for greater coordination of SOF and DoS activities, and between their respective personnel seems particularly higher in AFRICOM than in other COCOMs. Such concern inevitably raises the question of the Unity of Command. This leads to the question of which organization might finally get the lead over the other one when it comes to planning then executing SOF-DoS pre-conflict operations.

As a conclusion about the merging process between SOF and DoS resources during the planning phase, several indicators seem argue for the robustness of the interagency structures already existing between both organizations. This direct legacy of a renewed and adjusted interagency synchronization process at the strategic level, has been praised by most of the SOF officers surveyed. Questioned about the benefits gained in operations from their DoS partners, whether it was in planning or in execution phase, they tend to recognize more easiness when it comes to planning special operations, than executing them:[87]

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[86]U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Improved Planning, Training, and Interagency Collaboration could Strengthen DOD's Efforts in Africa* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, July 2010), http://www.gao.gov/assets/310/307767.html (accessed 11 March 2013).

[87]See Appendix B, question #6/14.

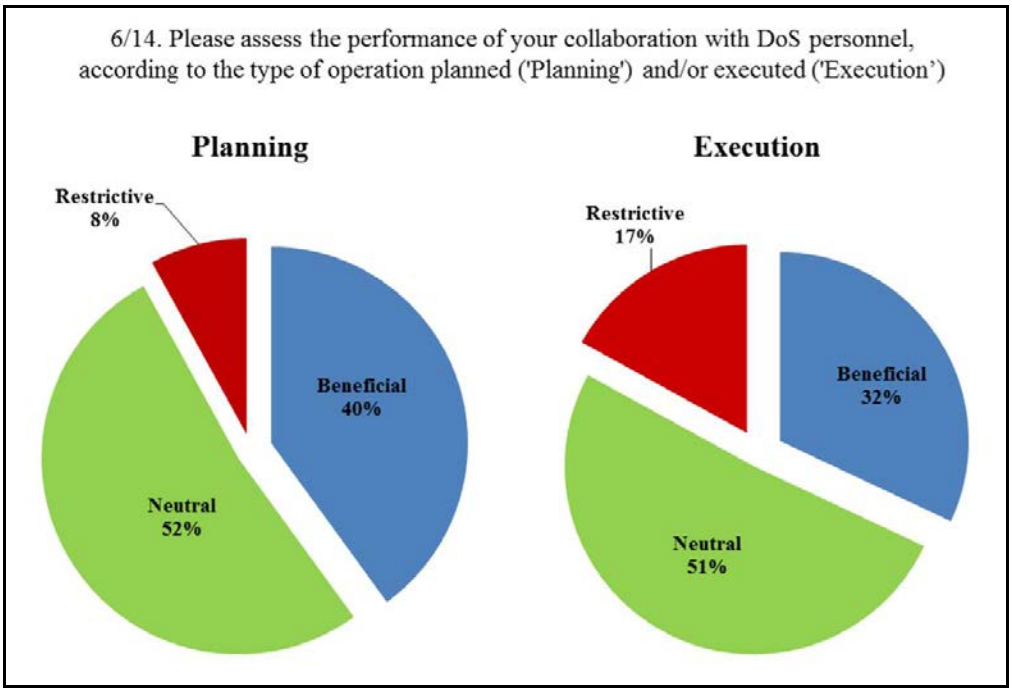

Figure 8. SOF officers assessing the DoS contribution in Planning and Execution phases

Source: Created by author.

Prioritizing SOF and DoS shared expertise toward "left of the line" operations

Last step in the interagency cycle as previously depicted in figure 2,[88] the "execution" phase, is particularly critical for objectively assessing the relevance and the feasibility of an increased merging process between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention. Executing an operation melding personnel from two disparate but complementary organizations is the most visible and exposed demonstration of an operational interagency process. Only a coherent and sequential synchronization between SOF and

[88]See figure 2.

DoS personnel, from the education to the planning phase *via* the training, can ensure the successful conduct of interagency operations with long-term results. Scrutinizing the execution phase is equivalent to answering to the following questions. How do SOF and DoS successfully operate jointly on the ground, down to the lowest levels of execution, in conflict prevention? What are the main impediments for such a merging process to be fully optimized?

Mainly due to the significant progress made over the past ten years in intense and complex engagements such as Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom, 81 percent of the SOF officers surveyed during the research process have already executed operations 'on the ground' beside DoS personnel.[89] This significant ratio proves that interagency experiences between SOF and DoS in the 'execution' phase is much more than just a marginal process. Theses several SOF officers assessed in some detail the level of performance of their collaborative work with DoS counterparts, while considering the type of special operation performed. Figure 9 depicts the results obtained:

[89]See Appendix B, question #5/14.

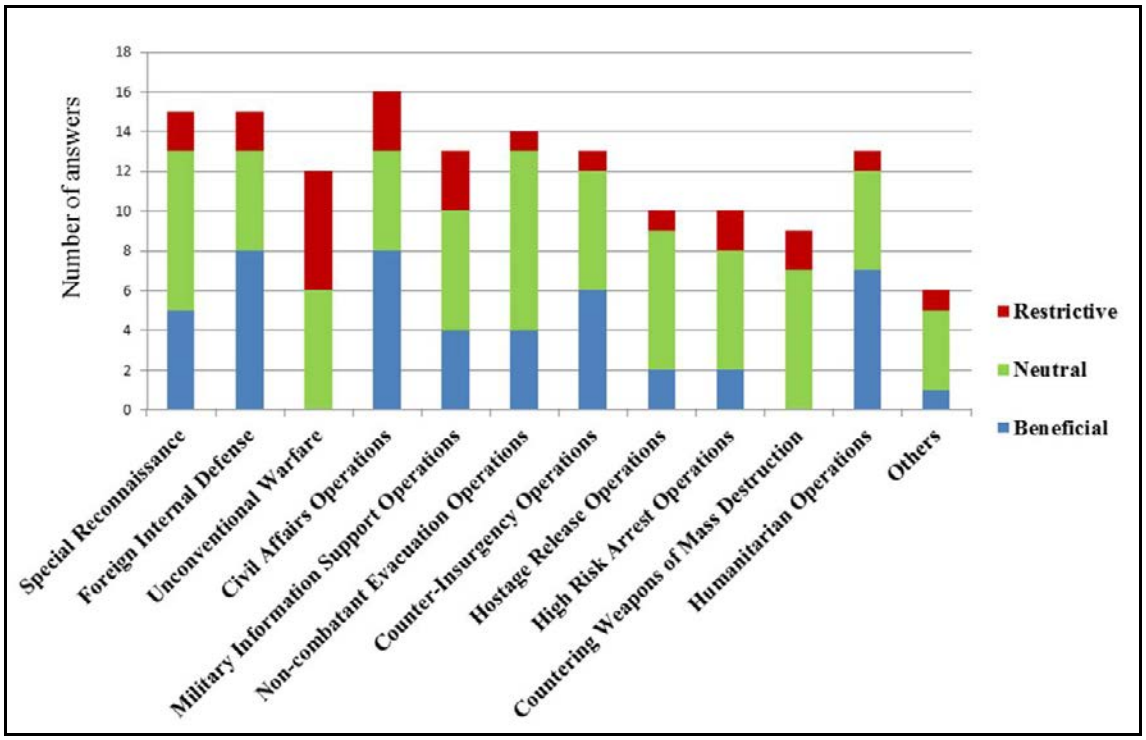

Figure 9. The DoS interagency collaboration for executing special operations, as assessed by SOF officers

Source: Created by author.

These results provide several indications regarding the way SOF and DoS resources have been combined for the execution of different kind of special operations. The most regular special operations involving a synchronized use of military and diplomatic resources are the Civil Affairs (CA), the Intelligence-focused (Special Reconnaissance), as well as FID, or NEOs. On the other hand, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) operations, High Risk Arrests (HRA) or Hostage Release Operations (HRO) are less frequently conducted actions where personnel from both organizations are jointly employed. Therefore, a discrepancy persists between non-kinetic and kinetic operations, between engagement-oriented and Direct Action missions,

between long-term engagements and surgical strikes. Furthermore, the DoS participation beside SOF in the execution phase is assessed to be more beneficial in some engagement-oriented operations such as CA, FID or Humanitarian Assistance (HA). This result can be logically justified by the nature of these operations, that naturally require a whole-of-government approach, and a comprehensive strategy exceeding the basic capabilities and prerogatives of the SOF. In such operational cases, the success largely depends on the relations established with the Host Nation authorities (national, provincial and local ones), their security forces as well as their population. The diplomatic expertise of the Country Teams, as well as the level of confidence they are supposed to have already gained locally, are of primary importance for fostering the SOF engagement.

By contrast, the benefits gained from merging diplomatic actions with special operations are almost insignificant for HRA and HRO operations, and even nonexistent for Countering WMD and Unconventional Warfare (UW) strategies. The very high level of tactical and technical skills required for the first ones, and the clandestine even covert nature of the second ones can justify these results. In such specific cases, the DoS collaboration is perceived as more disruptive than beneficial. Therefore, there appears to be a limit to the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations when it is understood this mode of operation might quickly become counter-productive even hazardous. The clandestine nature of some special operations has been assessed as the least beneficial SOF trait for boosting the collaborative work between both organizations on the ground. There is a natural tendency among DoS personnel to feel uncomfortable with covert and clandestine activities, and more generally with military intelligence

gathering activities SOF would perform in the guise of diplomatic actions.[90] Both SOF and DoS surveyed populations have designated quite similar areas of expertise for assessing the benefits gained from the partnered organization, while grading the clandestine parameter as the worst one. To the question "Which areas of expertise from the DoS would you assess as the most beneficial ones when operating overseas together?,"[91] the SOF officers provided the following ranking: (1) Understanding of local dynamics, (2) Legitimate access to Host Nation authorities, (3) Cultural awareness, (4) Humanitarian aid and social development expertise, and (5) An "alibi" for covering clandestine activities. DoS students ranked SOF domains of expertise in a quite similar manner:[92] (1) Understanding of local dynamics, (2) Cultural awareness, (3) Light footprint, (4) Expertise in dealing with hazardous and high-risk situations, (5) Flexibility in proposing several tactical options, and (6) Ability to act discretely even clandestinely.

The study of the execution phase also means addressing the often critical issue of Unity of Command in interagency processes. In other words, this thesis could not assess in an objective manner the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention without considering the way such an operational execution is led and supervised. Beside the Culture and the Procedures parameters, analyzing the Command and Control gets most of its relevance during the 'execution' phase, as previously mentioned in the circle matrix.[93] To be successful, the execution of

[90]Doman, Interview.

[91]See Appendix B, question #7/14.

[92]See Appendix C, question #8/16.

[93]See figure 2.

any special operation including civilian enablers from a disparate organization requires a high level of clarity and fluidity in the operational chain of command. The concept of Unity of Command becomes essential in order to deny the risks of redundancy, or overlapping information sharing processes. The existence of two parallel chains of command having their own Command and Control habits seems to be a major obstacle to such fluidity in coordinating interagency operations. The figure below demonstrates how far a tedious bureaucratic process, sustained by SOF and DoS communities in parallel, might adversely influence the execution of common special operations. Thirty percent of the SOF officers and the DoS students surveyed consider it as the main constraint undermining the operational collaboration between both organizations:

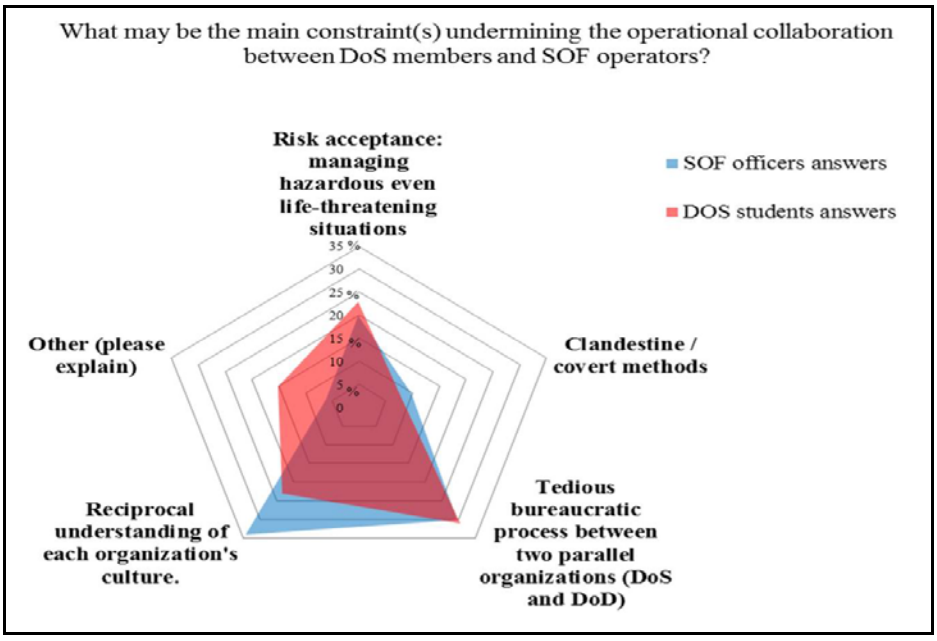

Figure 10. Constraints undermining the operational collaboration between SOF and DoS

Source: Created by author.

The extensive powers granted to the Geographical Combatant Commanders (COCOMs) over any military forces operating within their area of responsibility might create a paradoxical situation. On one hand, it sets the conditions for a strengthened unity of command over any military from any service, thus ensuring coherence of objectives and the achievement of a better unified action. However, on the other hand, it does not allow enough flexibility and adaptability to the management of small scale SOF engagement in conflict prevention, working alongside DoS partners. In light footprint strategies combining diplomatic and SOF capabilities, simplicity in the chain of command is a critical prerequisite for long-term success. As previously observed through the ICAF example, the interagency process as currently performed in conflict prevention seems to confer the lead to the DoS. The integral inclusion of the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOC) under the command of their respective COCOMs could logically be considered as hindering and disrupting the autonomy and the adaptability of the SOF units operating beside Country Teams and other DoS partners (e.g., CSO personnel). This constraint is all the more obvious given that conflict prevention requires a very high level of interagency integration, mostly because of the absence of any other legitimate military presence than SOF in most of the countries concerned. Readjusting the SOF chain of command in overseas operations has recently become a key area of interest for the current USSOCOM Commander. As part of Admiral McRaven's overall project to develop a strongly recognized "global SOF network" through the COCOMs, the other U.S. Government agencies and major partner nations, strengthening the capabilities of the TSOC in direct support of the COCOM has become a priority

concern.[94] The intent is to foster the planning but also the C2 capacities within these TSOC, which are currently assessed as under-manned and under-resourced.[95] In order to provide much more operational coherence and visibility to the COCOM, but also the Ambassadors and the Country Teams, the USSOCOM wants to place much more emphasis on the different C2 echelons permanently deployed overseas. Such an increased allocation of planning and execution forces, in direct support of the regional military commanders and their DoS counterparts, would greatly enhance the SOF proficiency in operating in conflict prevention. A key C2 node had been implemented as part of the TSOC chain of command for leveraging such a merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in Phase 0–Shape, at the tactical level execution: the Special Operations Command–Forward (SOCFWD). A SOCFWD represents an adhoc C2 structure under the command of a TSOC, and plugged to a U.S. Country Team in order to ensure unity of effort between SOF operators and their DoS partners, acting at the tactical level. Such a C2 structure appears as an essential operational link between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention. Empowering its capabilities for executing combined SOF-DoS tactical operations, while widening its freedom of maneuver from strategic level COCOMS are key prerequisite to consider. A SOCFWD represents appropriate, scalable C2 structures for fostering the synchronization process between SOF and DoS in

[94]Admiral William McRaven, Commander, USSOCOM, "Written Statement Before the 113th Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, Intelligence, Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee," 17 April 2013.

[95]Richard S. Woolshlager and Fredrick J. Wright, "Force Of Choice: Optimizing Theater Special Operations Commands To Achieve Synchronized Effects" (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA, December 2012), i.

preventive activities, also called "left of the line" operations.[96] Located at the crossroads of DoD, DoS and HN resources, the SOCFWD is an interactive platform tailored to meet the specific objectives identified through an interagency planning process, as depicted in the scheme below:

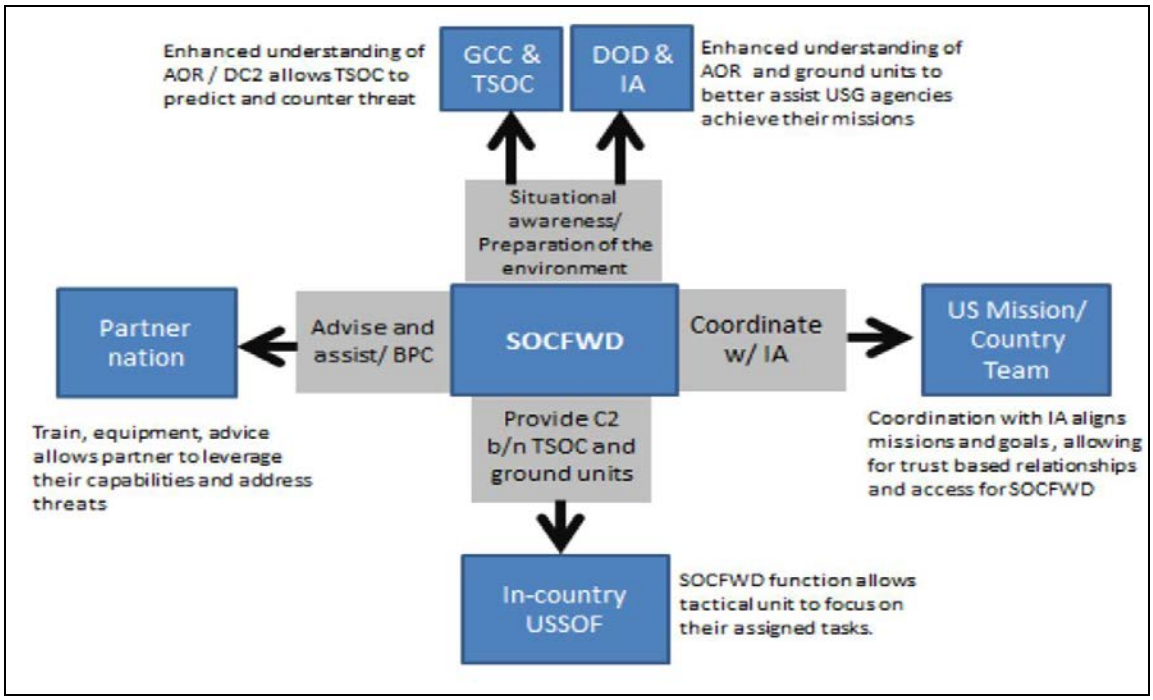

Figure 11. Special Operations Command Forward (SOCFWD) key functions

Source: Richard S. Woolshlager and Fredrick J. Wright, "Force of Choice: Optimizing Theater Special Operations Commands to Achieve Synchronized Effects" (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA, December 2012), 44.

When it comes to formulating and applying common conflict prevention strategies, the current state of play of the SOF-DoS synchronization process reveals quite

[96]Colonel Jack J. Jensen, "Special Operations Command (Forward)–Lebanon: Campaigning 'Left of the Line,'" *Special Warfare* 25, no. 2 (April-June 2012): 29-30.

significant disparities between the four phases of the interagency cycle. The board depicted in the figure below recapitulates the current assessment of the main structures and frameworks aimed at fostering the interagency process between SOF and DoS, from the strategic down to the tactical levels.

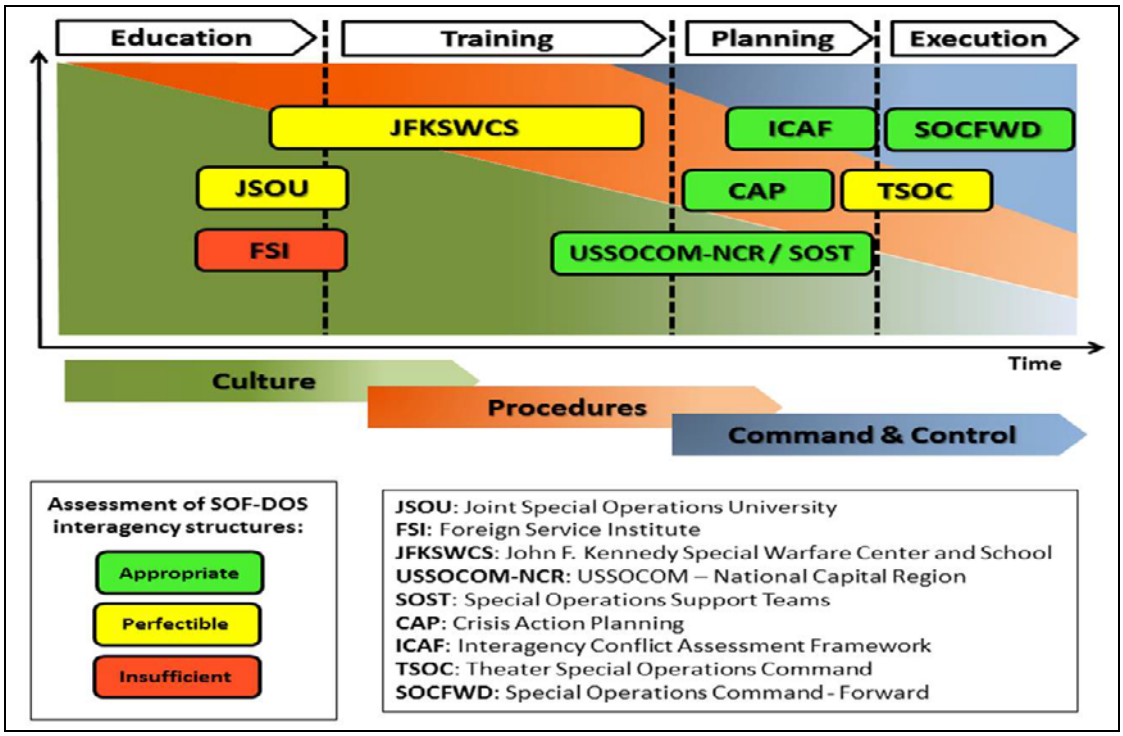

Figure 12. The SOF-DoS interagency process assessment board

Source: Created by author.

If the past decade has provided personnel from both organizations with many pragmatic opportunities to enhance their way to plan and then execute common operations, critical weaknesses persist in the initial steps of the interagency cycle. The most critical challenges remain in the domain of transverse education, as well as in the training process. The JFKSWCS can obviously be considered as one the very few

structures able to empower a better synchronization between SOF and DoS, mostly in terms of procedures sharing. Filling such critical gaps is all the more essential to the interagency linearity and coherence in left of the line operations, where the degree of uncertainty and the absence of any declared military intervention require SOF and DoS to act beyond their cultural discrepancies, and to clearly speak a compatible if not common operational language. The key results gained from the surveys and the interviews performed all along the research process have converged toward a similar observation, shared by members from both organizations: a real merging process might fully blossom as soon as a specific interagency process is handled "left of the beginning,"[97] from its very initial steps.

[97]This expression in intentionally inspired from a leadership briefing made by LTG John Mulholland Jr., the current USASOC Commander, about Unconventional Warfare (UW) strategies, 23 August 2010*:* "the critical point in time where military UW skills are crucially relevant to decision makers is "left of the beginning" of a policy decision contemplated by the United States Government regarding sensitive operations."

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This paper assessed the current strengths and weaknesses of merging diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention, while identifying opportunities to seize and better exploit further this interagency collaboration. The challenge of significantly improving such process is critical, as it may very well determine the chance for operational success in conflict prevention. Anticipating crisis-escalation situations, identifying and addressing the root causes of instability across the world are becoming a major for American foreign policy. The past interagency engagements in Iraq, and the current one in Afghanistan have significantly enhanced the way SOF and DoS operated together down to tactical levels. However, it only provided opportunities in stabilization and reconstruction operations, rather than conflict prevention strategies and activities.

Improving the interagency process between SOF and DoS, and shifting operational priorities toward military and diplomatic anticipatory capabilities are one of the major goals recently advocated by policymakers and military leadership. Such strategic ambitions have therefore attracted the curiosity and the attention of several experts in the interagency domain. As previously observed, the literature existing about these two topics seems quite abundant. However, a persisting lack of studies narrowing the scope to the collaborative mechanism between SOF and DoS resources in Phase 0–Shape has motivated the conduct of this thesis. Including interviews with some key personnel from both organizations, as well as surveys among the SOF and the DoS

students within the CGSOC Class 13-01, the research process has provided very helpful contributions and arguments.

Due to their respective and regularly shared domains of expertise, the part commonly played by the SOF and DoS in pre-conflict activities must be adequately synchronized. Such a high level of synchronization inherently requires detailed integration and compatibilities between both organizations. The research performed in support of this thesis has revealed how far this interagency cycle is out of balance between its four sequential phases: Education, Training, Planning, and Execution. If the merging process between SOF and DoS for successfully conducting conflict prevention operations is to be improved in every phase, critical gaps remain at the education and training levels. Pronounced efforts must be made in the organizational cultures, to influence the performance of the follow-on steps, including the common training between DoS and SOF, which is almost nonexistent currently.

Therefore, by the light of this research process, a clear answer can be provided to the initial primary research question: Can the cutting-edge interagency ambition to implement commando-diplomat teams down to the tactical level be successfully applied in support of conflict prevention strategies? Not only is the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention relevant, but it is also feasible in the conditions required by the policymakers. A first crucial reason for the applicability of such interagency process is the strong willingness expressed by authorities from both organizations, but also underlined by its main actors and tactical level operators. In addition to that willingness, some educational and planning structures already exist, some of them having proved their efficiency for dealing with contingency

operations. Such structures are also strengthened by the interagency complementarities provided by ongoing connections between both organizations. An objective assessment of the context required for fostering synchronization between SOF and DoS resources in pre-conflict activities tends to prove that the U.S. interagency system is robust enough for proposing appropriate structures. However, if willingness and structures currently create the positive conditions for improving such merging process, many efforts still need to be made in the realm of organizational mentalities, mutual perceptions, and unity of command. The merging process between SOF and DoS in conflict prevention will not be able to reach a significant and salutary step further without transcending some habits even fallacies ingrained in each organization. Furthermore, unity of command is an essential prerequisite for ensuring coherence and visibility in the planning phase, as well as detailed and linear interagency integration for operational execution, with long-term influence. Even if the DoD operational chain of command may provide adequate structures for SOF integration at the strategic and operational levels, the tactical one remains largely uncovered and unanswered. Such a vacuum would create asymmetries between operators from both organizations. Therefore, the need for proposing adhoc C2 structures at the tactical level becomes urgent, and is a key element in the proposals and recommendations formulated by this thesis.

Proposals

The following proposals tie in the four phases previously identified in the interagency cycle: Education, Training, Planning and Execution. They intend to provide realistic and attainable solutions for addressing the major issues raised in the analysis performed all along the thesis.

Fostering the Educational process

Regarding the educational process, two major proposals can be made toward two complementary axes of effort: an horizontal process, and a diagonal one.

1. The horizontal educational process must be reinforced by increasing the number of transverse assignments between SOF and DoS. On the SOF side, the integration of DoS advisors and planners must spread across the different layers and services within the whole SOF community, and not only at the USSOCOM headquarters. The intent is for the SOF to get the opportunity to inculcate the DoS perspectives and approaches at every step of their professional education. On the DoS side, the presence of SOF personnel must be significantly strengthened. The very positive initiatives recently initiated by the USSOCOM leadership through the USSOCOM-NCR network should give much more priority to the bilateral connections with the DoS. Such reinforcement must be directed in favor of the CSO, whose expertise in conflict prevention and whose expeditionary mindset and abilities make it a legitimate structure for integrating SOF personnel. This inclusion of SOF advisors and planners would also go part way in addressing one of the CSO main issues: its current under-resourcing.[98]

2. An improved diagonal educational process would aim to leverage the internal education peculiar to each organization for their own personnel, while encouraging the integration of students from the partnered agency in specific courses. On the SOF side, the JSOU is a key educational platform already possessing the willingness and the

[98]After more than one year of existence (from January 2012), the CSO barely reach 150 personnel, while deploying them in more than 15 countries, usually between 3 and 6 months. Source: interview with Dr. Kurt E. Müller, Department of State, CSO, Washington DC, 19 April 2013.

expertise for performing a wide spectrum of interagency courses. However, the JSOU must anticipate the critical challenges SOF and DoS are to face with in a near future on operations, by giving the priority of its interagency education to Phase 0 operations. In addition, the SOF education proposed within the U.S. Army CGSOC, at Fort Leavenworth, could also serve as a very appropriate arena for empowering mutual understanding between SOF field-grade officers and DoS mid-career personnel. The idea would be to systematically integrate any DoS student in the SOF courses, and to assign them a practical exercise about planning conflict prevention strategies at the operational levels as part of the curriculum. On the DoS side, the FSI is not appropriately tailored for fostering the understanding of interagency processes in pre-conflict operations. The institute has to place a greater emphasis on such activities, while encouraging the inclusion of SOF operators within their courses.

Centralizing the interagency Training

As described in the previous chapter, the training phase is the most critical and unfinished one when it comes to assessing the synchronization process between SOF and DoS. Unlike the education, the training must be specifically tailored to meet operational objectives. It requires much more than simple educational and pedagogic assets, but a whole environment allowing SOF and their DoS partners to train realistically as they will operate together overseas. Therefore, the very high level of expertise already gained by the JFKSWCS, and the diversity of its training infrastructures, make it the ideal platform for boosting the training process between SOF and DoS personnel in conflict prevention operations.

Toward a Commando–Diplomat Task Force?

At the convergence of planning and execution considerations, proposals must be made toward the creation of a Commando–Diplomat Task Force, as an adhoc operational structure, specifically tailored for achieving strategic goals through the combined and simultaneous use of SOF and DoS resources. Dr. Kevin E. Stringer and Katie Sizemore have already published a very relevant and useful contribution on that realm, arguing that the application of PRT style interagency teams for preventive actions would be highly valuable.[99] However, Dr. Stringer himself recognizes that such interagency teams mixing personnel from DoD, DoS, CIA, USAID and other agencies might struggle with inherent cultural discrepancies among these disparate partners: "the organizations are not culturally ready."[100] Therefore, this thesis proposes the implementation of intermediate and less ambitious structures, only made of personnel from DoS (prioritarily CSO) and SOF. Such a Task Force, that could also be named Shape and Prevent Task Force, in reference to the Phase 0 where it is supposed to operate, would become the central node for executing conflict prevention operations at the tactical level, using SOF and DoS resources, under a unified command. The future of the merging process between diplomatic actions and special operations in conflict prevention considerably depends on two requirements: enhancing SOF autonomy from the centralized control exerted by the GCC, and ensuring a clear unity of command of the merged team. The first requirement

[99]Stringer and Sizemore, "The U.S. Interagency Role in Future Conflict Prevention," 11-20.

[100]Kevin D. Stringer, Interview with author.

might be addressed by extending the concept of distributed C2[101] to Commando–Diplomat Task Forces, providing the SOF operators with enough flexibility and freedom of maneuver to align their action with the diplomatic objectives defined under the authority of the Ambassador, or the Chief of Mission (COM). Distributed C2 are inherent to the development of much more distributed operations in a near future. Distributed operations are commonly planned then executed by SOF and DoS, and defined as follows: "Distributed operations emphasize the employment of small, discrete teams in countries where a large U.S. military presence might be unacceptable or inappropriate."

Commando–Diplomat Task Forces could be placed under a DoS or a military lead, whether it is tailored to operate in only one country, or at a sub-regional scale. Allowing this flexibility for determining who has to take the lead over such an interagency Task-Force is essential. Here, it is not about advocating for the leadership of one organization to the detriment of the other one, because the unity of purpose of any contextual and operational situation encountered in conflict prevention calls for a C2 model that must remain adaptive. As pre-conflict strategies tend to promote more regional approaches than before, beyond the borders of a single country, systematically conferring the lead to an Ambassador or a Country Team would logically make little sense in many cases. Currently, the GCC system, through the TSOC and the SOCFWD, is the only one to allow the performance of sub-regional strategies under a unified command. For instance, a Commando–Diplomat Task Force purposely tailored to address

[101]"Distributed operations" and "distributed C2" are two concepts introduced and praised by the U.S. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT), as explained in Richard S. Woolshlager and Fredrick J. Wright, "Force of Choice: Optimizing Theater Special Operations Commands to Achieve Synchronized Effects" (Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA, December 2012), 22.

security and terrorist issues in the Sahel region could not smartly operate under the only leadership of the US Ambassador to Mali. However, SOF and DoS resources deployed to collectively address internal security issues in Philippines would rather operate under the authority of the Chief of Mission in Manila.

Way ahead: The "Legitimacy" factor

Making both organizational cultures much more compatible, fostering common training by systematically applying interagency procedures, and achieving unity of command in the operational execution phase are critical to the success of merging SOF and DoS resources in conflict prevention. Such improvements seem technically realizable, because of the interagency environment SOF and DoS are already used to operate in. It might be a quite long process, and the speed of its achievement will primarily rely on leadership abilities. The character, willingness and clear-sightedness of SOF and DoS leaders, from the strategic level down to the tactical one, from policymakers down to team leaders, are critical ingredients for the success of such interagency recipe.

However, a combined use of diplomatic and military resources in Phase 0–Shape tends to cross swords with the frequent absence of any legitimized framework for intervention. A critical stalemate might appear: deploying SOF units in a country where the first signs of an upcoming conflict has not justified yet the formal approval from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) of any sort of military intervention. This legitimacy factor remains of primary importance when it comes to assess the feasibility of deploying SOF resources beside diplomatic counterparts in left of the line operations. And this legitimacy factor also significantly influences the way SOF units may be

employed in support of foreign policy objectives, between clandestine and overt methods. As of May 2013, the situation in Syria proves the complexity of using SOF in support of diplomatic objectives, as the UNSC cannot make any consensual decision between partisans of a legitimized military intervention, and their opponents. Therefore, exploring the contemporary and future challenges of Unconventional warfare in support of diplomatic goals in a non-legitimized framework of intervention would be a relevant topic, complementary to this thesis.

APPENDIX A

APPROVAL FORM FOR SURVEYS

DEPARTMENT OFTHE ARMY
U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
100 STIMSON AVENUE
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027-2301

ATZL-SWA-QA 22 March 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Major Flavien Lanet, Central Michigan University

SUBJECT: Request for Survey Research: Collaboration between Department of State personnel and Special Operations Forces

1. Your request to survey/interview CGSS Students is:

   ☐ Approved

   ■ **Approved with Conditions (see below)**

   ☐ Denied (see below)

Your Survey Control Number (SCN) will be issued when the survey has been built and is ready for administration. This survey number must be clearly displayed on the front of your consent form as illustrated below:

CGSC APPROVED SURVEY
SCN: 13-03-055
Date of Administration

2. Conditions:

   a. Survey to be built and administered through CGSC Inquisite System.

   b. Central Michigan University provides IRB review and oversight. An approval letter from Central Michigan University must be received prior to the conduct of the research.

3. Surveys administered by students of CGSC through the Inquisite System meet **EXEMPT criteria category 2**. No identifying information is collected or available to the investigator.

4. You are required to submit an *End of Project Data Collection Report* to the CGSC Quality Assurance Office when data collection for your project is complete. This report can be found at: http://cgsc.leavenworth.army.mil/QAO/download/End_Of_Data_Collection_Report.doc.

5. Should you have questions concerning the above, please contact Ms. Maria Clark in the CGSC Quality Assurance Office, room 4521 Lewis & Clark.

E-Signed by CLARK.MARIA.L.1005828011
VERIFY authenticity with Approvelt
CLARK.MARIA.L.1005828011

Maria L Clark
Human Protections Administrator
IRB Administrator
Survey Control Officer

APPENDIX B

SURVEY AMONG SOF STUDENTS, CGSOC CLASS 13-01

Thank you for supporting my MMAS Thesis with the Command and General Staff College (CGSC).

The purpose of the survey is to assess the compatibility between diplomatic actions and special operations, with a specific focus on interagency integration. This will provide a better understanding of differences and similarities between the two organizations (Department of State and Special Operations Command) in terms of culture and procedures.

This survey is voluntary and confidential.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

As an experienced SOF officer, your participation is valuable and appreciated.

If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me by email: flavien.lanet@us.army.mil

The reviewing IRB contact is Maria Clark at maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil

Major Flavien Lanet

This survey has been reviewed by the CGSC Human Protections Administrator and the QAO.
The survey control number is #13-03-055

1/14. Are you a...

- ○ US SOF officer
- ○ Foreign SOF officer

2/14. In a Special Operations Forces (SOF) assignment, have you worked with a member from the Department of State (DoS)? For International SOF officers, have you worked with diplomats from your country? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, in a COCOM HQ
- ☐ Yes, in CONUS (other than a COCOM)
- ☐ Yes, Overseas Operations (OEF, OIF, ISAF, SFOR...other than COCOM)
- ☐ No, I have not.

How many opportunities in a COCOM HQ did you get to work with DoS personnel?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

How many opportunities in CONUS did you get to work with DoS personnel?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

How many opportunities in Overseas Operations did you get to work with DoS personnel?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

3/14. At which level did you work with DoS personnel? (select as many as apply):

- ☐ At the strategic level
- ☐ At the operational level
- ☐ At the tactical level

4/14. Which operational phase were you operating in? (Select as many as apply)

- ☐ Conflict prevention (before the hostilities)
- ☐ Crisis - War management (during the hostilities)
- ☐ Stabilization operations (after the peak of violence)

5/14. Have you already executed operations "on the ground" beside DoS personnel?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

6/14. Please assess the performance of your collaboration with DoS personnel, according to the type of operation planned ('Planning' column) and/or executed ('Execution' column). (select all that apply)

Type of operation	Planning					Execution				
	Highly Beneficial	Beneficial	Neutral	Restrictive	Highly Restrictive	Highly Beneficial	Beneficial	Neutral	Restrictive	Highly Restrictive
Special Reconnaissance / Intelligence collection	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Foreign Internal Defense	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Unconventional Warfare	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Civil Affairs Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Military Information Support Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Non-combatant Evacuation Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Counter-Insurgency Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hostage Release Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
High Risk Arrest / Kill or Capture Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Humanitarian Assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

You selected 'other'. Please Explain.

7/14. Which areas of expertise from Department of State would you assess as the most beneficial ones for DoS personnel when operating overseas together? Rank these areas of expertise from 1 (=best) to 5 (=least significant).

- [ ] Cultural awareness
- [ ] Legitimate access to Host Nation authorities
- [ ] Understanding of local dynamics (social, political, economic...)
- [ ] An "alibi" for covering clandestine activities
- [ ] Humanitarian aid and social development expertise

8/14. What may be the main constraint(s) undermining the operational collaboration between DoS members and SOF operators? (select all that apply)

- [ ] Risk acceptance: managing hazardous even life-threatening situations
- [ ] Clandestine / covert methods
- [ ] Tedious bureaucratic process between two parallel organizations (DoS and DoD)
- [ ] Reciprocal understanding of each organization's culture.
- [ ] Other (please explain)

9/14. Which area would you assess as currently the <u>most</u> successful one in terms of close collaboration between SOF operators and DoS personnel? (select all that apply)

- ○ Education (common courses, transverse assignments...)
- ○ Training (common exercises...)
- ○ Planning (synchronized planning in staff assignment, Geographic Combatant Command, or with "Country Teams" in embassies...)
- ○ Operational execution ("boots on the ground" together...)
- ○ Other (please explain);

10/14. Chose the organizational value that you consider as the most appropriate definition of SOF culture.

Based on "OCAI model" of survey, as elaborated by: Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, 1999.

- ○ **"CLAN" culture** *(teamwork, participation and consensus at every level of command are encouraged before making any decision. The organization is highly committed to its people. Leaders are seen as team builders and mentors).*
- ○ **"ADHOCRACY" culture** *(innovation, creative thinking as well as "out of the box" thinking are promoted. Leaders are therefore considered as innovators and risk-takers).*
- ○ **"MARKET" culture (***the organization is based on a competitive mindset. Expectations are high to get things done. Mission achievement prevails over any other consideration).*
- ○ **"HIERARCHY" culture** *(the work environment is structured. The organization requires people to strictly adhere to orders. Formal tasks and procedures must be smoothly executed).*

11/14. Chose the organizational value that you consider as the most appropriate definition of Department of State culture.

- ○ **"CLAN" culture** *(teamwork, participation and consensus at every level of command are encouraged before making any decision. The organization is highly committed to its people. Leaders are seen as team builders and mentors).*
- ○ **"ADHOCRACY" culture** *(innovation, creative thinking as well as "out of the box" thinking are promoted. Leaders are therefore considered as innovators and risk-takers).*
- ○ **"MARKET" culture (***the organization is based on a competitive mindset. Expectations are high to get things done. Mission achievement prevails over any other consideration).*
- ○ **"HIERARCHY" culture** *(the work environment is structured. The organization requires people to strictly adhere to orders. Formal tasks and procedures must be smoothly executed).*

12/14. During which operational phase would you consider the use of a close and strong collaboration between SOF units and personnel from the Department of State as essential?

- Phase 0: Shape
- Phase I: Deter
- Phase II: Seize the Initiative
- Phase III: Dominate
- Phase IV: Stabilize
- Phase V: Enable Civil Authority

13/14. Generally thinking, how would you grade the current synchronization and inter-agency process between Special Operations Forces and the Department of State? Check the appropriate box on this scale of values (1 is the lowest grade, 5 is the best one)?

- 1 (Worst)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Best)

14/14. Are you personally willing to work in close collaboration with DoS personnel on operations, including acting side-by-side on the ground?

- Strongly willing
- Willing
- Indifferent
- Reluctant
- Strongly reluctant

APPENDIX C

SURVEY AMONG DOS STUDENTS, CGSOC CLASS 13-01

Thank you for supporting my MMAS Thesis with the Command and General Staff College (CGSC).

The purpose of the survey is to assess the compatibility between diplomatic actions and special operations, with a specific focus on interagency integration. This will provide a better understanding of differences and similarities between the two organizations (Department of State and Special Operations Command) in terms of culture and procedures.

This survey is voluntary and confidential.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

As an experienced Department of State member, your participation is valuable and appreciated.

If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me by email: flavien.lanet@us.army.mil

The reviewing IRB contact is Maria Clark at maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil

Major Flavien Lanet

This survey has been reviewed by the CGSC Human Protections Administrator and the QAO.
The survey control number is #13-03-056

1/16. Within the Department of State, have you already worked for the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

2/16. In previous assignments, have you worked with Special Operations Forces (SOF)? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, in a COCOM HQ
- ☐ Yes, in CONUS (other than a COCOM)
- ☐ Yes, Overseas Operations (OEF, OIF, ISAF, SFOR...other than COCOM)
- ☐ No, I have not.

4/16. At which level did you work with SOF personnel? (select as many as apply):

- ☐ At the strategic level
- ☐ At the operational level
- ☐ At the tactical level

5/16. Which operational phase were you operating in? (Select as many as apply)

- ☐ Conflict prevention (before the hostilities)
- ☐ Crisis - War management (during the hostilities)
- ☐ Stabilization operations (after the peak of violence)

How many opportunities in a COCOM HQ did you get to work with SOF?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

How many opportunities in CONUS did you get to work with SOF?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

How many opportunities in Overseas Operations did you get to work with SOF?

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3 or more

6/16. Have you already executed operations "on the ground" beside SOF personnel?

- Yes
- No

7/16. Please assess the performance of your collaboration with SOF personnel, according to the type of operation planned ('Planning' column) and/or executed ('Execution' column). (select all that apply)

Type of operation	Planning					Execution				
	Highly Beneficial	Beneficial	Neutral	Restrictive	Highly Restrictive	Highly Beneficial	Beneficial	Neutral	Restrictive	Highly Restrictive
Special Reconnaissance / Intelligence collection	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Foreign Internal Defense	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Unconventional Warfare	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Civil Affairs Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Military Information Support Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Non-combatant Evacuation Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Counter-Insurgency Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hostage Release Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
High Risk Arrest / Kill or Capture Operations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Humanitarian Assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

You selected 'other'. Please describe.

8/16. **Which areas of expertise from Special Operations Forces would you assess as the most beneficial ones for DoS personnel when operating overseas together?** Rank these areas of expertise from 1 (=best) to 6 (=least significant).

- [ ] Cultural awareness
- [ ] Expertise in dealing with hazardous and high-risk situations
- [ ] Visualization of local (Host Nation) dynamics (social, political, security...)
- [ ] Flexibility in proposing several tactical options
- [ ] Ability to act discretly even clandestinely
- [ ] Light footprint

9/16. **What may be the main constraint(s) undermining the operational collaboration between DoS members and SOF operators?** (select all that apply)

- [ ] Risk acceptance: managing hazardous even life-threatening situations
- [ ] Clandestine / covert methods
- [ ] Tedious bureaucratic process between two parallel organizations (DoS and DoD)
- [ ] Reciprocal understanding of each organization's culture.
- [ ] Other (please explain) _____

10/16. **Which area would you assess as currently the <u>most</u> successful one in terms of close collaboration between SOF operators and DoS personnel?** (select all that apply)

- ○ Education (common courses, transverse assignments...)
- ○ Training (common exercises...)
- ○ Planning (synchronized planning in staff assignment, Geographic Combatant Command, or with "Country Teams" in embassies...)
- ○ Operational execution ("boots on the ground" together...)
- ○ Other (please explain); _____

11/16. Chose the organizational value that you consider as the most appropriate definition of Department of State culture.

Based on "OCAI model" of survey, as elaborated by: Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, 1999.

- **"CLAN" culture** *(teamwork, participation and consensus at every level of command are encouraged before making any decision. The organization is highly committed to its people. Leaders are seen as team builders and mentors).*
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- **"HIERARCHY" culture** *(the work environment is structured. The organization requires people to strictly adhere to orders. Formal tasks and procedures must be smoothly executed).*

12/16. Chose the organizational value that you consider as the most appropriate definition of SOF culture.

- **"CLAN" culture** *(teamwork, participation and consensus at every level of command are encouraged before making any decision. The organization is highly committed to its people. Leaders are seen as team builders and mentors).*
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- **"HIERARCHY" culture** *(the work environment is structured. The organization requires people to strictly adhere to orders. Formal tasks and procedures must be smoothly executed).*

13/16. During which operational phase would you consider the use of a close and strong collaboration between SOF units and personnel from the Department of State as essential?

- Phase 0: Shape
- Phase I: Deter
- Phase II: Seize the Initiative
- Phase III: Dominate
- Phase IV: Stabilize
- Phase V: Enable Civil Authority

14/16. Generally thinking, how would you grade the current synchronization and inter-agency process between Special Operations Forces and the Department of State? Check the appropriate box on this scale of values (1 is the lowest grade, 5 is the best one)?

- 1 (Worst)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Best)

15/16. On a "DoS perspective", would you assess the Special Operations Forces as the most "compatible" military units within the Department of Defense to operate with?

- Yes
- No

16/16. Are you personally willing to work in close collaboration with SOF personnel on operations, including acting side-by-side on the ground?

- Strongly willing
- Willing
- Indifferent
- Reluctant
- Strongly reluctant

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